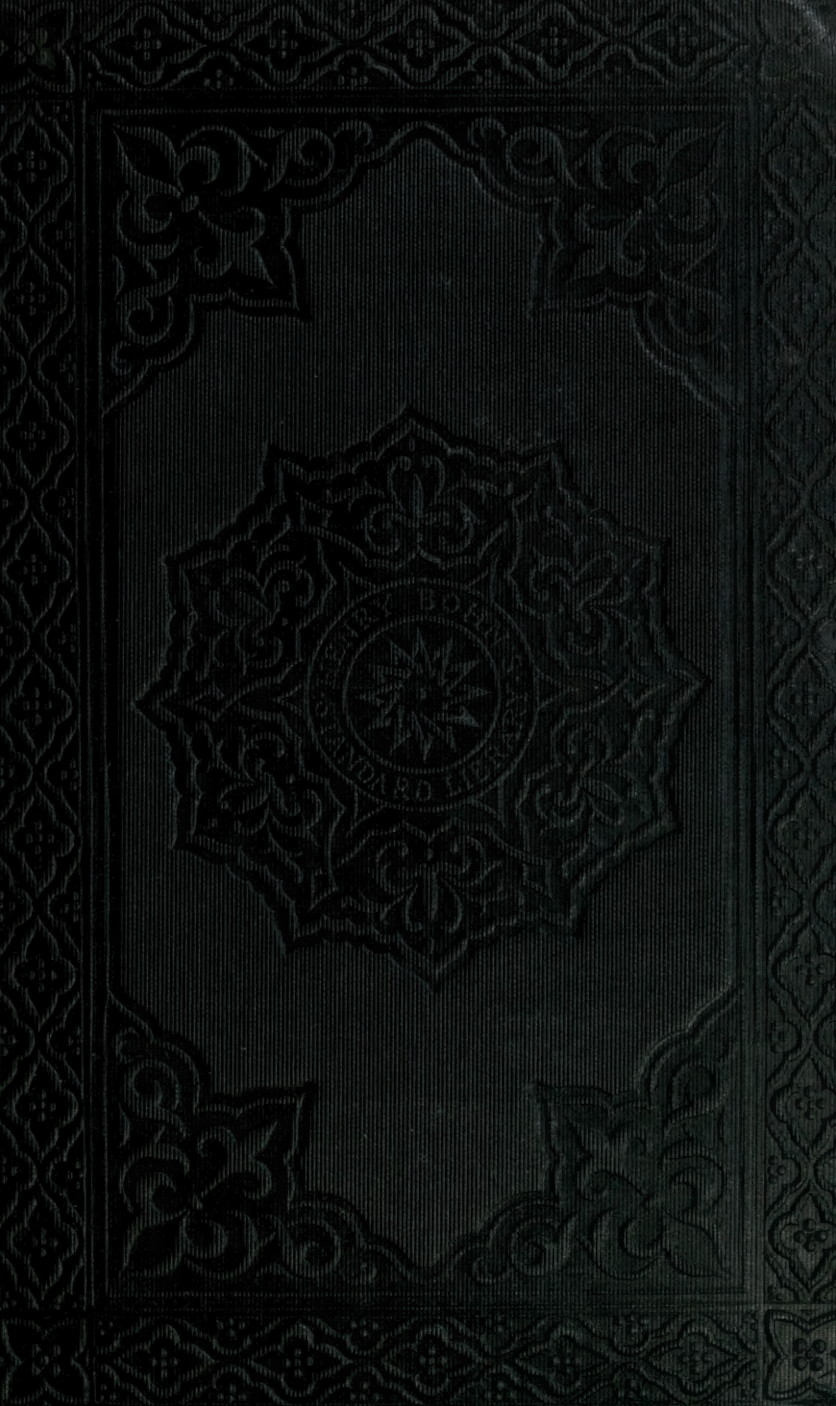

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Prince Eugene.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH,

WITH

HIS ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE:

COLLECTED FROM THE FAMILY RECORDS AT BLENHEIM
AND OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

BY

WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.
ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED

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Author of "British History Chronologically Arranged."

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MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

Ch. LXXXVI.—Rupture with the Queen.—1709, 1710.

After a short continuance at the Hague, Marlborough took his departure for England, in consequence of repeated representations from Godolphin, that without his presence all things in parliament and at court would fall into confusion. In taking leave of the States, he expressed a gloomy foreboding of the treatment which awaited him at home. "I am grieved," he said, "that I am obliged to return to England, where my services to your republic will be turned to my disgrace."*

On the 8th of November he landed at Aldborough, in Suffolk, and on the 10th arrived in London, amidst the warm congratulations of the people, who were not yet seduced by his enemies to forget his great and glorious services.

On the 15th parliament assembled, and the queen, in her speech from the throne, alluded to the artifices of the enemy, and their deceitful insinuations of a desire for peace, with a view to create divisions and jealousies among the allies, in which they were entirely disappointed. Her majesty then exulted in the events of the glorious campaign, and the most remarkable victory with which Providence had blessed her

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 385.

arms. She demanded such supplies as were necessary for reducing the exorbitant and oppressive power which had so long threatened the liberties of Europe; and, after again adverting to the insincerity of the enemy, concluded, that force alone would compel them to such terms as would be safe and honourable for all the allies.

After the usual expression of thanks, and a resolution to support her majesty in the prosecution of hostilities, the Lords, in their address, congratulated her on the continued success of her arms under the Duke of Marlborough, whose conduct was worthy of the chief command in so just a war, and whose valour was equal to the bravery of her troops. The address of the Commons dwelt with no less energy on the successes of the commander, and the victory of Malplaquet; and in general, promised to grant speedy and effectual supplies. Both Houses, as usual, voted thanks to the general for his late victories, and the great and important successes of the last campaign. On his first appearance in parliament, on the 17th of November, the thanks of the Peers were conveyed to the duke by the lord chancellor, in a speech more florid than usual; "I am commanded by the Lords to give your grace the thanks of this house, for your continued and eminent services to her majesty and the public during the last campaign, of which nothing can be greater said, than what her majesty (who always speaks with the utmost certainty and exactness) has declared from the throne; that it has been, at least, as glorious as any which have preceded it. But this repetition of the thanks of this august assembly has this advantage over the former, that it must be looked upon as added to, and standing on, the foundations already laid in the records of this house, for preserving your memory fresh to all future times; so that your grace has also the satisfaction of seeing this everlasting monument of your glory rise every year much higher. I conclude with wishing that God may continue in a wonderful manner to preserve so invaluable a life, and that you may not only add to that structure, but finish all with the beauties and ornaments of a lasting peace."

Marlborough did not imitate the ornamental language of the chancellor, but replied in concise and modest terms: after expressing his thanks for the honour which the Peers had

conferred on him, he ascribed the principal merit to his companions in arms. To a committee of the House of Commons who waited upon his grace with a congratulatory address, he replied in terms similar to those of his answer to the Lords.

In less than a month, the pledge given by both houses of parliament was amply redeemed by the grant of six millions for the service of the ensuing year, an augmentation of troops, and every requisite for the successful continuance of the contest. All things seemed to announce confidence and unanimity between the queen, the ministry, and the parliament, as well as a successful perseverance in the struggle which was to establish the liberties of England and Europe.

But we now reach the commencement of that portentous period in which the proud fabric of glory and security, reared by the union of Marlborough and the Whigs, was overthrown, by the jealousy of the queen, the bickerings of party, and the intrigues of that crafty statesman who had risen through his patronage. Biassed by the incessant representations of her private advisers, the queen listened more than ever to the popular clamour, that she was reduced to bondage by a single family; and she was anxious for an opportunity of humbling that grandeur which she had raised, and of gratifying her personal dislike to the duchess of Marlborough.*

* A single family had absorbed the majesty of the throne, and the queen had become a mere puppet in the hands of her chief servants. Godolphin, though one of the triumvirs who ruled, was too much of a waverer, and too much under the influence of the duchess, to be absolutely independent. Virtually, however, all the powers of the crown were exercised by them. Abroad, Marlborough represented the sovereign, and swayed the councils of the continental states; at home, the court, and partly state affairs too, were under the control of the arrogant duchess; and Godolphin, aided by his Whig confederates, managed the two houses of parliament. In carrying on this usurpation, much management was employed, and occasionally the queen was inclined to be refractory. In desperate cases, as already noted, the duke was resorted to, and he wrote letters to combat the objections or overcome the obduracy of Mrs. Morley. The draught of such letters (see p. 482. vol. II. note) appear to have been sometimes first sent over to be corrected and amended by Mrs. Freeman, assisted by her friend, Mr. Montgomery, and then a clear copy, made by the duke, was addressed to his guileless royal mistress. Her Majesty at length became restive under this system; and the crisis appears to have been hastened by the

On the arrival of the duke in England, the whole nation was in a ferment, on account of a factious sermon delivered by Dr. Sacheverell, preacher of St. Saviour's, Southwark, before the lord mayor and aldermen. In this effusion, the obsolete doctrine of passive obedience was revived; the principles of the revolution reprobated; the dangers of the church depicted in the strongest colours; the ministers in general loaded with reproach, and Lord Godolphin, in particular, pointed out to public indignation by the invidious name of "Volpone." It was afterwards printed, either at the request or with the secret connivance of the lord mayor, though the court of aldermen deemed it so reprehensible as to withhold the customary vote of thanks to the preacher.

Though possessing no literary merit, this pulpit invective was instantly lauded by the high-church party, as if it had been penned almost by special inspiration; and, on the other hand, was reprobated by the Whigs in a no less extravagant strain of reproach. It became the test of party zeal, and the stimulus of party rancour, and, to the astonishment of subsequent times, attracted as high a degree of attention as the most admired effort of human eloquence.

The sensitive mind of Godolphin was deeply affected by an invective which he ought to have treated with contempt; and repeated consultations were held by the ministers on this subject, as if it had been a matter of the highest interest to the state. As usual, however, in this heterogeneous body, a great diversity of opinion prevailed. Some, among whom was Somers, proposed to refer the prosecution to the ordinary tribunals; and this sentiment was adopted by Marlborough, though he warmly sympathised with his friend Godolphin, and observed, that such preachers, if encouraged by impunity, would soon preach them out of the country. But the great majority in both houses of parliament encouraged the zealous adherents of government to resort to a more formal and rigorous proceeding; and, unfortunately, the proposal of Sunderland prevailed, to bring the obnoxious sermon before the

obnoxious Whigs forced into her councils. Indignant at the restraint imposed on her inclinations in the choice of her ministers, she gave her confidence to new advisers, who opened her eyes to a sense of her true position, and the hateful, and not very disinterested, thraldom to which she had been subjected. — Ed.

cognisance of the legislature, and institute an impeachment against the preacher.

The partisans of this opinion were eager to hasten the inquiry; because they fondly anticipated a public triumph of their own principles, and a no less public condemnation of those of their opponents. Accordingly, the customary proceedings were instituted in the House of Commons. After some opposition from Harley and his partisans, a vote of accusation was carried; the charge of impeachment drawn up and submitted to the Peers, and the most zealous Whigs appointed to manage the trial.

But although Marlborough had yielded to the torrent, that he might not offend his friend and colleague, or incur the suspicion of the Whigs, he appears to have taken little public share in the transaction. He was scarcely present in the House of Lords during any of the discussions on the impeachment, and though he attended on the day the trial was ordered, he did not enter into the debates.*

The preparations for the trial, and the discussions to which it gave rise, increased the general ferment; and had the Whigs been sufficiently cool to consider the re-action of popular sentiment, they must have been conscious that they were recurring to a test which would manifest their own weakness. Harley, however, and his associates formed a juster estimate of the state of the country, and were encouraged to urge the queen to some measure, which without risking the stability of her government, would indicate her dislike of the administration, and the declining interest of the Duke of Marlborough.

* The persecution by impeachment of Sacheverell was a capital mistake in the government, by giving undeserved importance to a miserable, but very impudent, pretender. "It is difficult," Mrs. Macauley remarks, "to say which is most worthy of ridicule — the ministry, in arming all the powers of government in their attack upon an obscure individual, or the public, in supporting a culprit whose doctrine was more odious than his insolence, and his principles yet more contemptible than his parts." This "trumpeter of sedition," as Cunningham calls him, or, according to the ladies, and others of his zealous partisans, this "persecuted saint," was a preacher of little merit, whose dogmas and preaching it is likely would never have been heard of, had not the violence of faction lifted him into an ephemeral notoriety. The error of Godolphin and Marlborough in dealing with such a mean and insidious disturber, has doubtless operated as a warning to future ministers. — Ed.

At this period the Junta had obtained the offices and honours which they had pursued with such unabated zeal and perseverance, in contradiction to the wishes of the queen. But they had no sooner gained these principal objects than their jealousy of Marlborough and Godolphin increased, and fatal dissensions arose among themselves.

Of these bickerings and divisions Harley and his associates artfully profited. They armed themselves with the positive orders of the queen, an authority which they expected the commander-in-chief would not venture to withstand, to mortify him on a point which was at once calculated to gratify the favourite, and manifest the decline of his own influence. If he yielded, they hoped to degrade him in the opinion of the army; if he resisted, they were confident of provoking a princess so tenacious of her prerogative, to adopt a more vigorous and decisive resolution.

An opportunity occurred on the death of Lord Essex, in the commencement of January, which vacated two military preferments, that of lieutenant of the Tower, and a regiment, both which were usually bestowed at the recommendation of the commander-in-chief. To mortify Marlborough, the government of the Tower was instantly promised by the queen to Earl Rivers, and the appointment took place in a manner extremely offensive to the duke, and by a stratagem unworthy of the royal dignity. In consequence of the secret advice of the queen and Harley, Lord Rivers waited upon Marlborough, and requested him to use his interest with her majesty to confer on him the vacant office. The duke, eluding his request with many professions of an inclination to oblige him, observed, that the post was not worthy of his acceptance, and that he should be happy to serve him on a future occasion. After many solicitations from the earl, and evasions on the part of the duke, the former requested permission to solicit this favour himself from the queen, and hoped he might be allowed to say that his grace had no objection to him. To this Marlborough consented, from a conviction that he should be previously consulted. But he was grievously deceived. Repairing without delay to the palace, he solicited the queen to bestow the vacant place on the duke of Northumberland, adding, that by that means her majesty might gratify the duke of Somerset by presenting to his son,

the earl of Hertford, the Oxford regiment, which Northumberland would resign in his favour. The queen instantly replied, "Your grace is come too late, for I have already granted the lieutenancy to Earl Rivers, who has assured me that you had no objection to him." He was surprised at this mortification; but, though he made strong remonstrances, the queen persisted in her resolution, and he was forced to submit.*

As a still further indignity, he had scarcely quitted the royal presence, when he received the command of the queen to confer the vacant regiment on Colonel Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham. Being resolved not to brook this second mortification, the general was anxious to ascertain whether he should be supported by the leaders of the Whigs. With this view, he employed the agency of the duchess and Mr. Maynwaring to convey his resolution to Lord Sunderland, and demand his advice and concurrence; and he received the strongest assurances of support from the whole party. Sunderland, in particular, answered for the co-operation of Lord Somers, who offered to accompany the duke to the queen, or attend her majesty alone, for the purpose of remonstrating against the appointment.†

Confident of support, the duke accordingly requested an audience, in which he dwelt with great concern on the hardships which he had recently endured, and, in particular, represented to her majesty the real prejudice which would result to the army by preferring so young an officer as Colonel Hill, before others of higher rank and longer services. He also expatiated, with considerable energy, on the mortification he should receive from bestowing so extraordinary and partial a favour on a brother of Mrs. Masham: "It is, madam," he added, "to set up a standard of disaffection to rally all the malcontent officers in the army." He concluded his remonstrance in warm but becoming language, by recalling to her mind a recollection of his great services, and her former kindness, exhorting her to change her resolution, and not to force upon him so ungracious an order. These representations made not the slightest impression: the queen listened

* Swift's Memoirs relating to the change in the queen's ministry in 1710.

† Letter from Lord Sunderland to the duchess, without date.

with extreme indifference to his objection, and said, drily and peremptorily, "You will do well to advise with your friends." He quitted her presence in great disorder, and was observed by the attendants in the antechamber to depart more moved and troubled than was usual.

Finding the queen inflexible, the general, in conformity with the offer made by Lord Sunderland, proposed to wait on her majesty with Lord Somers, hoping that his own remonstrances, joined with those of the lord president of her council, who was considered as the head of the Whigs, would be attended with more weight. Lord Somers appeared to acquiesce, and Saturday afternoon was appointed for an interview, in which, to use his own words, he was to receive the commands of the duke. But as his lordship was prevented from attending by indisposition, Marlborough refused to temporise any longer. In company with the duchess, he quitted London, and retired to Windsor Lodge, without the customary ceremony of taking leave, and on the very day on which a cabinet council was to be held.

From the suddenness of his departure, his absence was a secret until the hour of meeting arrived. The effect was, however, far different from that produced at the cabinet council in 1708, when he had extorted the dismission of Harley. The customary business was transacted; the queen, who was present, took no notice of his absence, and none of the members ventured to make the bold and decisive appeal which had then produced its due effect. The assembly finished its deliberation, and separated with the usual forms.

Meanwhile, in the first impulse of resentment, Marlborough formed the natural and proper resolution of resigning, unless Mrs. Masham was removed; and drew up a letter, to be transmitted to the queen, in which, after a statement of his grievances, the mortifications which he had received, the abuse which Mrs. Masham and her relatives heaped upon him and the duchess, and her pretensions to interfere in the military promotions, he adds, "I hope your majesty will either dismiss her or myself."

This letter was submitted to the consideration of the treasurer and the Whig leaders. It was warmly approved by Sunderland and his zealous adherents; but Godolphin was extremely alarmed at so decisive a measure, and used every

exertion in his power to moderate the resentment of his mortified friend, and to oppose the adoption of Sunderland's advice, which he considered as equally intemperate and dangerous.

On the 16th two meetings were held at the house of the duke of Devonshire, to deliberate on the measures to be pursued in this difficult crisis, as well as to take the letter into consideration. The treasurer attended neither; from the first, Lord Somers, who was expected, absented himself, on the plea of being detained by company at home; and at the second Lord Sunderland did not appear, alleging the excuse of indisposition. Nothing, therefore, was concluded on either occasion, except a general resolution to support the commander-in-chief in his determination of not complying with the appointment of Colonel Hill.

Meanwhile Godolphin acted with equal pusillanimity. On transacting business with the queen, he was too timid to risk any allusion to the duke, and her majesty took no notice of his absence, which induced the minister to observe, in a letter to the duchess, "By what I can collect, she is more displeased with me than with any body else."* But he, unfortunately, proved too successful in dividing the Whig lords, and preventing the adoption of a measure, which he erroneously considered as ruinous to the country, because it might terminate in the resignation of the general, and the dissolution of the ministry. It was he who prevented the attendance of Somers at the first meeting, by urging him to request an immediate audience of the queen, for the purpose of dissuading her from the resolution which she had adopted.

Being admitted into the closet, Lord Somers said, "I have presumed to request this opportunity, in consequence of a conversation with the Duke of Marlborough; and as his grace was yesterday absent from council, I deem it my duty to speak of it to your majesty. I found, madam, the Duke of Marlborough under the greatest uneasiness, having heard that your majesty was inclined to hearken to some people, who might give their advice in contradiction to the opinions of those who had so well succeeded, and to hearken to recommendations for advancement in the army, without, as usual,

* Letter from Lord Godolphin to the duchess, Monday night, at ten (Jan. 16.).

consulting with his grace. This conduct will be attended with fatal effects, and when it is once discovered that applications to others are successful, it will be impossible to prevent factions in the army, and to preserve the discipline and unity which have been hitherto maintained. His grace likewise apprehends there are some persons who endeavour to do him ill offices with your majesty.

"And may I," he continued, "take the liberty to observe, that the Duke of Marlborough is not to be considered merely as a private subject, because all the eyes of Europe are fixed upon him, and business is transacted with him, under the notion of one who is honoured with your majesty's entire trust and favour; and as men depend on all which he says, it gives full force and effect to all which he does. The army also unanimously obeys him, because the soldiers look up to him for advancement. Nor can I conceal from your majesty the unspeakable inconveniences which must ensue, should any thing be done which may induce ill-intentioned persons to conceive that there is any alteration in this matter, or which might excite jealousy in him, and diminish his zeal and spirit at so critical a period."

After a short pause the queen replied, "I have a full and lasting sense of his long and great services, and no one dares attempt to do him ill offices with me, because if they did their malice would recoil on themselves. This I will confirm when I see him, and then I doubt not I shall have the satisfaction of hearing him own, that, after mature reflection, he has changed his opinion, and will not continue to deem my proposal unreasonable."

"I presumed," adds Lord Somers, in the letter making this communication to the Duke of Marlborough, "to offer several other things; but I found her majesty very reserved, and not willing to enter into any farther explanation, and, therefore, according as the lord treasurer had advised, I took my leave."*

The cold and repulsive behaviour of the queen gave sufficient indications that she would persevere in her resolution; and Marlborough on his side appeared equally determined not to desist from his threat. In fact, the dismission of

* Lord Somers to the Duke of Marlborough, Jan. 16., Monday, six at night.

Mrs. Masham was the only effectual expedient, by which he could secure the continuance of the great, but motley administration. For as long as she remained at court, the confidential agent of Harley with the queen, she would always find means to give effect to his subtle contrivances, and would suggest new means of mortification and annoyance to the ministry. In this design Marlborough was supported by Sunderland, and a few zealous partisans. Yet though they coincided with regard to the end, they differed in the means; he wished to make it a matter of private remonstrance, while his son-in-law was desirous to bring it before the cognisance of parliament, which would have been an insult to the queen. Even the duchess, who could never speak of her former dependent but in terms of disgust and abhorrence, and who was not herself remarkable either for discretion or respect to the sovereign, seems to have disapproved so unbecoming a measure, and in the Vindication of her Conduct boasts of having assisted in preventing it.

It was evident that a strict alliance between Marlborough and the Whigs, and a perfect unanimity in the party itself, were necessary at this particular juncture, and we find Lord Godolphin observing to the duchess, — "There is no question but the interest of the Whigs will get the better of every thing here, and will certainly be extended as far as Lord Marlborough would have it; but in order to have that rightly guided, 'tis positively necessary you should both come to town as soon as you can, or otherwise the warmth of some heads may commit errors that are never to be recovered. I am sensible this advice may not agree with the notions of some others, who, I believe, wish as well, but are not capable of seeing so clear through this matter as I think I now do, and can soon explain it, when you come to town; but 'tis not to be done in a letter for many reasons."

These expressions of the treasurer fully prove that the Whigs were not unanimous in their opinion; and, although Marlborough himself was fully sensible that he could only depend for the successful termination of this unfortunate business on their vigorous co-operation, he still showed an unwillingness to contract an obligation, and entertained some scruples lest he should seem too eager in requiring their assistance. These sentiments appear from a letter of the

duchess to Mr. Maynwaring, dated Thursday morning: — "Lord Marlborough has written to Lord Sunderland, by this bearer, that he will be governed by his friends in all this matter; but his opinion was, that all must be undone, if this poison continues about the queen. I conclude you will see the letter; it was in answer to Lord Sunderland's to me, which was very warm from him, and all his friends; and I think his notions are right. If this business can be well ended, which I much doubt, there must always be an entire union, as I have ever wished, between Lord Marlborough and the Whigs; but he will not say so much as he thinks upon that subject at this time, because I believe he imagines it would have an ill air, and look like making a bargain for help; and I am of that mind too. But if this matter were settled, interest as well as inclination would make them friends as long as they lived."

It being found impossible, amidst all these vacillations, to form a consistent plan of conduct by letter, Mr. Craggs was despatched on Wednesday to wait on the duke at Windsor. The result of their conversation appears to have accorded with the opinion of the vigorous party, of which Mr. Craggs was the agent; for on Thursday morning he returned to London with a message, stating, that the duke persisted in his opinion, and that the original letter should be forwarded to the queen, which would finally decide the question, leaving no alternative but his resignation, or the dismission of Mrs. Masham.

Soon after the departure of Craggs, Cardonel, the duke's confidential secretary, arrived at Windsor Lodge, having been sent by Godolphin with two letters, one from himself, and one from Lord Somers.

The letter from Godolphin strongly depicted the agony of his mind at his unsuccessful attempts to alter the opinion of the queen, and his apprehensions of the ruin in which the country would be involved, should the duke continue unchangeable in his sentiments. "I am," he observes, "in so great a hurry, and my thoughts so much distracted with the confusion I see coming upon every thing, and every body equally, that I have neither had time to write, nor a mind enough composed to write with any sort of coherence, since I do not see any disposition in those most concerned, on

either side, to delay coming to extremities, though to the irrecoverable ruin of the public, nor even to do so much as is necessary to put themselves in the right, when those extremities come. I have done, therefore, with advising, and shall second, as well as I can, the methods you think most proper, be they never so differing from my too little sense; but I have too much experience, as well as too great concern for my friends, to have any quiet thoughts on this matter."

The letter from Lord Somers contained an account of the second audience, from which it appears that his remonstrances had made some impression, though the queen as yet concealed it from the treasurer; for, at the conclusion of his representations, to which she listened with peculiar attention, her majesty expressed, in terms of gracious condescension, her respect for the duke, and then added, "I do assure you that I feel for his grace as much kindness as ever; yet I am much surprised at the great offence which is taken at my recommendation, and when Lord Marlborough comes to town, I will endeavour to convince him that my friendship for him is as entire as he can desire." She did not, however, specify any particulars, or make any express declaration of her intentions, but concluded by saying, "I will send for the lord treasurer, and let him know my mind."

After briefly communicating the account of this audience, the lord president strongly recommended Marlborough to return to town, in order to perfect the good inclinations of the queen, to obviate difficulties, and to put an end to the rumours which agitated the public mind on account of his absence. Godolphin warmly seconded this advice, and pressed him to lose no time in returning. The same opinion was strongly supported by Secretary Boyle, and Godolphin had gradually obtained the concurrence of all the other members of the Junta, except Sunderland.*

After what had been resolved in the morning, the duke was equally disconcerted and surprised by these letters, particularly by the application for his immediate return. His reply will show that, notwithstanding his firm conviction, that the dismission of Mrs. Masham was necessary for the

* Lord Halifax appears to have been absent from London at this period, as I find no mention of his name in this part of the correspondence.

future safety of the administration, the alarms of his timid friend, and the advice of Somers, began also to make some impression on his mind.

"*Thursday night.*—I have this minute received yours of this day from the Treasury chamber, and am much more concerned for your uneasiness than any thing that can happen to myself. I beg of you to consider, in the temper the queen is in, if the letter I sent you by Mr. Craggs be not of more use to put myself in the right than any thing I can say to her, since she and Abigail will give what turn they please to my conversation. I am of your opinion that her majesty may have taken the resolution of not parting with me, but care must be taken that the world may know the truth; for should I now submit, the next time Mrs. Masham is angry, I must be used ill by the queen; but this is a very little part of the mischief we must expect. I do beg of you that you would, if possible, early to-morrow morning, speak with lord president, lord steward, Lord Orford, Lord Sunderland, Lord Wharton, and, if possible, lord chancellor and the duke of Newcastle; and whatever you shall then agree to advise me, I will do. I will keep Mr. Cardonel till two o'clock, in hopes of having an answer to this letter. I write to none of the lords, so that I desire you to make my compliments, and let them see this letter."

The duchess participated in his sentiments, and in writing to Mr. Maynwaring, she sends him an abstract of the two letters, and observes, "After Mr. Craggs went away with very good instructions, as I thought, an express came from the lord treasurer with two letters, one from himself, and the other from the lord president, with an account of what had passed upon Lord Marlborough's subject between them and the queen." After giving an abstract of the lord president's letter, she observes, "This is the substance and the very words; and yet he seems to wish that Lord Marlborough would come to town, which, I conclude, he does at the desire of Lord Godolphin; for he is very earnest to have Lord Marlborough there, which is certainly the most ridiculous thing for him in nature, as matters now stand; for either he should have let the queen and Abigail have done what they pleased, and resolved to make an end of the war, and so take his leave; or else he should gain the point that is so necessary to carry on any government at home; and if he comes to town, and hears the queen repeat Abigail's advice to satisfy him, I think he will make a strange figure. And if she wanted new arguments to govern the queen, she cannot fail of showing her that as soon as the parliament is up, or an ill peace made, that she might remember how near she was

being forced by this ministry, and that she cannot be safe till she has got rid of them all."

After this foreboding, in the very spirit of political prophecy, she continues — "And now I have taken the liberty to give you my poor opinion, I will give you an account of Lord Godolphin's letter, as short as I can. He shows, in the first place, the greatest desire imaginable not to bring this thing to extremity; but says he will agree to whatever Lord Marlborough would have, whether he likes it or not. Then he gives an account of his having spoken again to the queen this morning, and endeavoured to show the ruinous consequences of the indifference and little notice she took of Lord Marlborough's mortification and concern for her unkindness, adding that she would certainly be sensible of all he had said before to her upon that subject but too soon; to which he writes that she only made him a bow, but gave him not one word of answer; and he said, though she told lord president that she would send for him, and let him know her mind, that he believed it would not be till she had talked to Abigail. This is an exact account of both letters, and I conclude you will wonder with me why these lords, after such a description, should think it reasonable for Lord Marlborough to come. I am sure if he does, I shall wish he had never proceeded in this manner, but have gone to council in a cold formal way, never to the queen alone, and declared to all the world how he was used, and that he served till the war was ended, only because he did not think it reasonable to let a chamber-maid disappoint all he had done.

"I send you here a copy of what Lord Marlborough has written to Lord Godolphin by the messenger that brings you this. I desire you will go by eight in the morning to Lord Sunderland, and show him the copy of the letter and this, for I think it is not necessary for me to write another letter to him, I am so tired with this."

In the interview of Mr. Maynwaring with Lord Sunderland, at which Craggs and Walpole were present, he found him firmly resolved to persevere in his resolution, and heartily coinciding with the sentiments of the duchess.

Meetings continued to be held on this important affair, with a view, if possible, to reconcile the discordant opinions of Godolphin and the moderate Whigs, on one side, and Sun-

derland and his partisans on the other. In the course of these discussions the most violent altercations prevailed; Secretary Boyle observed to Mr. Walpole, who was of Sunderland's party, "Take care what you do, or the remedy will be worse than the disease;" and Sunderland warmly expostulated with Godolphin, telling him that none who pretended to be Whigs would fail in this dispute, except Mr. Boyle and Mr. Compton; but the treasurer, though chagrined at the invective, spared no pains to enforce the contrary opinion. He alarmed Lord Somers, he wheedled Orford and Wharton, and he ventured to renew his solicitations to the queen, continuing, at the same time, his anxious efforts to soothe the resentment of Marlborough, and reconcile him to his royal mistress.

In the mean time, Marlborough, perplexed by this discordance of opinion, and these endless discussions, adopted a middle course. On Friday night or Saturday morning he wrote a letter to the queen, containing a vehement invective against Mrs. Masham; but without adding, as he had before proposed, the alternative of making her removal the condition of his continuance in office.

In this letter, which is printed in the "Conduct," he declares that his discontent did not arise from the particular case of the regiment, but from numerous mortifications to which he had been before exposed. "This," he observes, "is only one of a great many mortifications that I have met with; and as I may not have many opportunities of writing to you, let me beg of your majesty to reflect what your own people and the rest of the world must think, who have been witnesses of the love, zeal, and duty with which I have served you, when they shall see that, after all I have done, it has not been able to protect me against the malice of a bedchamber woman."

After other reflections on the insults he had received from Mrs. Masham and Harley, and desiring her leave to retire, he concludes — "And your majesty may be assured, that my zeal for you and my country is so great, that in my retirement I shall daily pray for your prosperity, and that those who shall serve you as faithfully as I have done, may never feel the hard return I have met with."*

* Conduct, p. 232.

During this interval, Godolphin and the Whig lords had continued to importune the queen; and Secretary Boyle had the courage to declare, that if the Duke of Marlborough retired, her crown was at stake. Even many of those who secretly caballed with Harley, ventured to suggest the danger and impolicy of compelling the general to resign at so critical a juncture. At the same time the agitation of the public mind increasing, and hints being thrown out in the House of Commons*, that not only some motion would be brought forward against the favourite, but that an attempt would be made to suspend the supplies, the obstinacy of the queen was shaken. Convinced that she could not save her confidante without abandoning her purpose, she condescended to summon Lord Godolphin to her presence late on Friday afternoon. In conformity with her promise to Lord Somers, she said to him, "I have duly taken into consideration the representations of the lord president, and I will not insist on the disposal of the regiment to Colonel Hill. I desire you to communicate this to the Duke of Marlborough, and tell him that I shall say so to him in person, when I see him, which I hope will be soon." "I wish, madam," replied Godolphin, "that your majesty had communicated this to the Duke of Marlborough at an earlier period, as he would then doubtless have been satisfied; but as I am afraid that at present it will not have so good an effect, I must request your majesty to write to him yourself." To this request the queen merely rejoined, "I will tell it him myself when I see him."

Soon after this audience, the letter of Marlborough reaching the queen, the force of his language and the firmness of his resolution to retire from the command, excited her fears, and strengthened that bias which she was already inclined to take.

On the ensuing day, when Godolphin waited on her majesty, she showed him the letter, and when he had read it he ventured to observe that it was a very good letter; to which she quickly retorted — "Do you think the conclusion of it good?" Godolphin replying, "It shows, madam, that he is very much mortified, and I hope your majesty intends to answer it;" the queen said, "Yes, but should I not stay for an answer to the message which I sent by you?" On

* Letter from Maynwaring to the duchess.

his replying, "With humble submission, I think not," the queen concluded the audience by saying, "I will write to the duke, and send the letter to you to-night."

In this communication she expressed much concern at several parts of his letter; and after assuring him that he had no ground for his suspicions, she desired him to return to town without delay, when she should be able to tell him that it was in nobody's power to make impressions upon her to his disadvantage.

After opening this letter, as he had been authorised by the duke, Godolphin adds, "I think the first part a little dry; but the latter part makes it impossible for you to resist coming to town without giving your enemies the greatest advantage imaginable against you:" and he justified this advice by the concurrent opinion of Lord Somers and the chancellor, whom, in conformity with his request, he had consulted.

Hitherto no representations could prevail with Marlborough either to return or to continue in the command, unless Mrs. Masham was dismissed. This determination appears in his letter to Lord Somers.

"*Jan.* 21. 1710. — My lord, I give you a great many thanks for the honour of your letter of the 19th, and I assure you I shall always have a great deference for your opinion. I am confident you have not yet been thoroughly informed of the causes of my just discontent; and though it would be tedious and endless to repeat them all, I beg leave to give you as short an account as I can of what has happened. On Wednesday se'ennight I waited upon the queen, in order to represent the mischief of such recommendations in the army; and before I came away, I expressed all the concern for her change to me that is natural from a man that had served her faithfully so many years, which made no impression; nor was her majesty pleased to take so much notice of me as to ask my lord treasurer where I was, upon her missing me at council. I have had several letters from him since my retirement here, and I cannot find that her majesty has ever thought me worth naming; so far from it, that when my lord treasurer once endeavoured to show her the mischiefs that would happen, she made him no answer but a bow, which shows plainly that what was said to your lordship upon my subject could proceed from nothing but the advice of those that have been the occasion of all these misfortunes, which I heartily wish might end without any other consequence than the mortification of your lordship's most faithful and most humble servant."

In the midst of this suspense, another meeting of the prin-

cipal Whigs was held at the duke of Devonshire's, to take into consideration the queen's letter; and after much debate it was resolved that, in their opinion, the duke ought to be satisfied with this concession on the part of the sovereign. This resolution was communicated to him, and accompanied by a note from Secretary Boyle, congratulating him on the happy termination of this unpleasant business; at the same time the letter of the queen opportunely reached him, and contributed to soothe the violence of his resentment. Yielding to the importunities of his friends, he repaired to town on the Monday, though he still maintained the resolution of requiring the removal of Mrs. Masham.* But the queen, who suspected this intention, and was more anxious to screen her favourite than to assert her prerogative, endeavoured to make a party against the address, which she still expected would be brought into parliament, should the general resign his employment. She condescended to apply personally to many of the Tories, and even to several of the Jacobites, who had long abstained from coming to court; and she found a support in Godolphin, Somers, and the lord chancellor, who not only continued to reprobate parliamentary interference as disrespectful and unconstitutional, but did not even approve the resolution of Marlborough to insist on the dismission of Mrs. Masham. This caution on the part of the principals discouraged the inferior agents, who, in the first instance had shown a determination in enforcing the demand, and Sunderland was left almost alone. Marlborough, observing this turn of affairs, listened with more attention to the representations of Godolphin and the moderate Whigs; and, after a struggle with his own better judgment, and in opposition to the remonstrances of the duchess, consented to be satisfied with the imperfect compromise which had taken place. He therefore complied with their advice, and relinquished the obnoxious condition of his continuance in office.

Marlborough was, accordingly, admitted to an audience on Tuesday morning; and, as the queen was delighted with what she justly considered as a victory, and was anxious to soothe his resentment, she received him with a profusion of

* As appears from the correspondence between the duchess and Mr. Maynwaring.

kindness which she had scarcely shown in the days of his highest favour.*

This half measure produced all the injurious consequences which might have been apprehended from a more vigorous proceeding, without any of its advantages. For the queen was in reality as much offended as if the disgrace of her favourite had been enforced, and became more firmly resolved to free herself from the control of the existing ministry, whose discordance she had learnt to appreciate. The only effect which it produced was to render her more circumspect; and she employed greater dissimulation to elude the vigilance of the ministry, and to seize an opportunity of striking a decisive blow, when she was no longer awed by the presence of Marlborough. The favourite, on her part, was fully awake to the danger which she had so narrowly escaped, and employed all the advantages of her situation to inflame the resentment of her royal mistress, and to annihilate that power which she was fearful would be turned against her with greater effect. Harley took advantage of these circumstances, and profited by the disposition of the queen and her favourite to mature and accomplish his designs, and to avail himself of the revolution which was now taking place in public opinion. Another fatal consequence of this unfortunate compromise was, that it increased the coolness between Marlborough and the Whigs. He found that he could not depend on their vigorous support, except in cases where their own interests or party views were concerned; and they, at the same time, seeing his coldness to them, as well as the decline of his favour, and the approaching disgrace of the duchess, began to vacillate, if not lean to a party which appeared likely to be predominant, and which they did not choose to offend.

* We have drawn the account of this political feud from a narrative of the duchess, which differs in a few circumstances from her account in the "Conduct;" and we have likewise derived much information from the correspondence which passed between Marlborough, Godolphin, Somers, Sunderland, the duchess, and Maynwaring. In this, the letters of Mr. Maynwaring are particularly curious, because he sent details to the duchess of the passing occurrences every day, and almost every hour. From these letters it evidently appears that the continuance of Mrs. Masham at court was owing principally to the efforts of Godolphin and Boyle, as well as to the objections which Somers and Cowper made to a parliamentary interference.

It also produced another injurious effect — it created a schism among the Whigs themselves, and contributed still more to indispose Sunderland and his zealous partisans towards Lord Godolphin and the members of the Junta; and we shall soon find a melancholy instance of this disunion, when the treasurer and the Whigs tamely suffered Lord Sunderland to be sacrificed.

The friends of the captain-general, indeed, endeavoured to flatter themselves, and persuade him that this was a triumph over the arts of his opponent and the opposition of the queen. He had certainly the satisfaction of giving the vacant regiment to Colonel Meredith, whose military services entitled him to the promotion; but the event only contributed still more to prove the ascendency of the favourite, for her brother was soon afterwards gratified with a pension of 1000*l.* a year, in which she publicly exulted. This termination of the contest demonstrated the impolicy into which Marlborough had been driven by the instances of his friends: and the event itself proved the first of that series of mortifications which preceded the fall of the treasurer, the forced resignation of the Whigs, the establishment of a Tory ministry, and his own disgrace.

CHAP. LXXXVII. — TRIAL OF DR. SACHEVERELL.—1710.

HARLEY and his partisans having experienced such obstruction from the presence of the Duke of Marlborough, sought a pretext to send him abroad, that they might carry their designs more successfully into execution. Unfortunately, such a pretext was furnished by his own friends, who with a view to impress the queen with a conviction of his consequence, fell into the snare which their adversaries had prepared. The Dutch having urged the necessity of his presence in Holland, both as general and plenipotentiary, his adherents proposed an address in parliament, which they were suffered to carry without difficulty.

This address, after representing the necessity of his immediate presence in Holland, for the interest of the common

cause, expressed the sense which parliament entertained of his great and unparalleled services, and applauded her majesty's wisdom, in having honoured the same person with the great characters of general and plenipotentiary, who was so competent to the discharge of two such important trusts. It concluded with requesting her majesty to order the Duke of Marlborough's immediate departure.

It being usual for the sovereign to answer an address on the day on which it is presented, the minister had prepared the following reply, echoing the address, and concurring in the high eulogium passed on the victorious general: —

"I thank you for your address, and am very well pleased with this declaration of your just sense of the Duke of Marlborough's eminent services, which I am so fully convinced of, that I shall always esteem him as God Almighty's chief instrument of my glory, and my people's happiness, and I will give the necessary orders for sending him immediately into Holland."

But when the minister presented the draught, she objected, and proposed to state that she had some time before given orders for his departure, as if she wished to throw on him the imputation of unwillingness to repair to the Continent. Godolphin remonstrated against this cruel imputation, and hinted that the change was suggested by some of her secret counsellors. The queen made the most solemn asseverations that it was her own thought, and was, with the utmost difficulty, brought to consent to a reply, which, though sufficiently cold, was something less invidious than that which she had proposed. In this reply to the address the queen observed, "I am so sensible of the necessity of the Duke of Marlborough's presence in Holland, at this critical juncture, that I have already given the necessary directions for his immediate departure; and I am very glad to find by this address that you concur with me in a just sense of the Duke of Marlborough's eminent services."

While this struggle was pending in the cabinet, and before the queen's reply had been given, the duke had already commenced his journey to the place of embarkation. In passing through the streets of the capital, his carriage was surrounded by multitudes, who expressed their regret for his departure; and many even presented petitions, requesting him not to

quit the country during the tumult and agitation which had taken place in consequence of the preparations for the trial of Sacheverell. The duke, however, considered his presence abroad as necessary for the public welfare, and did not receive the answer of the queen to the address till after his arrival at Harwich. He found it an additional indication of his declining favour.*

Marlborough was detained several days at Harwich by contrary winds; and after embarking, and being tossed about for three days, within sight of the Dutch coast, was driven back. He did not re-embark till the beginning of March, and, after a stormy and difficult passage, reached the Brill on the 18th. Proceeding to the Hague, he was employed, during the remainder of the month, in directing military preparations, and in attending to the negotiations which had been resumed between France and Holland. At the same time, his mind was kept in continual agitation, by the reports which he received from England, relative to the trial of Sacheverell. This celebrated process, which monopolised the hopes and fears of the British public, and may be said to have attracted the notice of Europe, was begun while Marlborough remained at Harwich. Before his departure from London, the Whigs had imagined that the majority which they possessed in parliament would have enabled them to obtain such a decision as would show the strength of their party, and fully vindicate the principles of the Revolution, against the attacks of their opponents. However originally averse to this mode of proceeding, and however unwilling to make so contemptible an incendiary the pageant of a popular triumph, he could not but be anxious for the result, and had used his influence in obtaining promises of support from several of his friends and adherents in both houses, who were lukewarm in the cause. Being at a distance, and unable to

* The original address is preserved in the hand-writing of the duchess accompanied with a detail of Godolphin's audience, when he presented it to the queen. The other circumstances are drawn from a letter of Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, in which he says, "I beg leave to send your grace her majesty's answer to the address, which it seems was not given when presented, nor did I hear what it was till the speaker reported it to the house to-day."—"This answer," he adds, "will appear well enough to those who do not know that there was a better prepared."

mark the vacillation of conflicting parties, or trace the private interests which operated during the struggle, he learned the progress of the trial with equal anxiety and concern.

The majority which had inspired Godolphin and the Whig leaders with overweening confidence was neither so steady nor so zealous as they had vainly hoped. Many had been discouraged by the effect of the recent contest respecting the vacant regiment, which portended a fatal schism in the administration; many were biassed by the wishes of the sovereign, which were unequivocally expressed; and many influenced by the dread of popular fury. From the operation of these motives, the discussions, instead of being calm and decisive, became warm and tedious; the Whigs were opposed at every step, and the party of Sacheverell appeared daily to gain strength. Amidst this alarming defection, the conduct of the dukes of Shrewsbury, Somerset, and Argyle, was no less injurious to the administration than encouraging to the opposite party.

The duke of Shrewsbury seemed at once to throw off his characteristic indecision, and took such an active part as could not fail to influence those who were guided by his movements. The duke of Somerset, though he had long identified himself with the Whigs, had, as we have seen, recently conceived a disgust against Marlborough for several reasons. In consequence of this alienation, he had given, in the preceding year, many proofs of his hostility to the two ministers, by attempting to sow divisions among the Whigs; and in the recent struggle relative to the regiment, instead of the decisive part which he had acted on the removal of Harley, he had manifested, at least, lukewarmness, if not opposition. He now came forward more publicly, and not only made zealous court to the queen, but canvassed, in her name, for recruits to the opposite party, and contributed, as much as any individual, to thwart and embarrass the managers of the impeachment. At the same time, the duke of Argyle was equally unmindful of his obligations: the attentions from the queen and the Tories sufficed to estrange him; and in this memorable trial, he not only vied with the duke of Somerset in zeal and activity, but indulged himself in the most injurious invectives against his former friend and benefactor.*

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 264.

A few extracts from the letters of the treasurer will display the great anxiety and exhaustion which he suffered during this troublesome trial, his extreme disappointment at the defection of so many peers, and his regret that he had ever consented to a measure of which he already experienced the mischievous effects.

"*Sunday, March 5.* — I have received the favour of yours of the 11th and 12th, and shall endeavour to obey all your commands in it as well as I am able to do; but this uneasy trial of Sacheverell does not only take up all my time, but very much inpairs my health, and how it will end I am not at all certain. But I certainly wish it had never begun; for it has occasioned a very great ferment, and given opportunity to a great many people to be impertinent, who always had the intention, but wanted the opportunity of showing it. Upon the whole, the great majority in the House of Lords which we had in the beginning of this session encourages people to commit follies, which, however, we cannot convince them of till it is too late."

"*March* 17. — The duke of Somerset labours hard against us, and makes use of the queen's name to North and South Britain with a good deal of freedom. I doubt he is pretty sure of not being disavowed, and I believe him entirely linked with the opposite party, upon the foot of knowing the queen's inclinations and flattering them, but is so vain and simple as not to be sensible he is incapable of being any thing more than what he is, or that that scheme is not supportable for above six months; but parliament being near at an end, the stream of favour will certainly run that way as soon as it is over."

"*March* 20. — Having no foreign letters, nor no wind that allows us to hope for them, I write these two lines only, by my Lord Fincastel, to tell you that at last Dr. Sacheverell is found guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, by a majority of seventeen votes: the numbers were sixty-nine and fifty-two. The duke of Somerset did not vote. Some of his friends said he was sick, but I fancy it was only his profound wisdom that kept him from the house. To-morrow we are to go upon the consideration of the punishment, and if that be made lighter than in itself is reasonable, I doubt some of our seventeen will desert from us. But this is plainly our case, and it is very well the session is so near an end; for otherwise the folly of some few, and the villainy of a great many, would make things extremely uneasy. Now, for aught I know, things may run on very disagreeably for six months longer. The parliament will rise in ten or eleven days from this time."

The treasurer was correct in his anticipation of the result, as we find by his letter of March 21st. "Our sentence," says he, "against Dr. Sacheverell is at last dwindled to a suspending him for three years from preaching, which question we carried but by six; and the second, which was for

incapacitating him during that time to take any dignity or preferment in the church, was lost by one: the numbers were 60 to 59. So all this bustle and fatigue ends in no more but a suspension of three years from the pulpit, and burning his sermon at the Old Exchange. The conjunction of the duke of Somerset and Lord Rivers with the duke of Argyle, and his brother, the earl of Ilay, has been the great occasion of this disappointment."*

Such was the termination of this impolitic trial, and the disappointment it created. The Duke of Marlborough justly considered the result as a proof that their favour was known to be rapidly declining with the queen, and that many of those who had been considered as Whigs, and had been their firm supporters, were now paying court to the rising party, and preparing for the catastrophe which they foresaw was approaching. He dwells with peculiar feeling on the proofs of ingratitude towards himself, which this unfortunate transaction brought to light, at the same time that he forebodes the increasing alienation of the queen, the ascendency of the Tories, and the downfall of the existing ministry.

To the Duchess.

"*Hague, March* 24. — Having time, I begin to write, though this letter cannot go till to-morrow. I am obliged to you for the account you give in yours of the 7th. I believe the behaviour of the duke of Somerset, the duke of Argyle, and Lord Rivers, are true signs of the queen's being of their mind, which must inevitably bring a great deal of trouble to her. I do, with all my heart, wish I had not recommended the duke of Argyle, but that can't now be helped; nothing is good but taking measures not to be in the power of ungrateful people. We have here so fine weather that I hope you interest yourself in that all the hands possible are employed for the carrying on of the building at Blenheim; for that is what I long to have finished, and that you and I might enjoy some happy years in that place."

"*March* 25. — By yours of the 10th, which I have received this morning, I find you have the last opinion of the duke of Somerset, and I believe, by many things that are put together, that you are in the right. However, I can't think it possible that he will give his vote or opinion for the clearing of Sacheverell; if he does, there is nothing he would not sacrifice to have power: his behaviour in this matter will be a true weathercock of the queen. I cannot have a worse opinion of any body than

* The duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay pronounced Sacheverell guilty, but voted against the ministry on the subsequent motions, relative to his suspension and disqualification.

I have of the duke of Argyle*; but what is passed cannot be helped. And as for Colonel Grant, I wish him the regiment, but I am so weary, and care so little for the management of almost any body but yourself, that I am very indifferent how any thing goes, but what leads me to a quiet life."

"*Hague, April* 4. — I have since my last had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 13th and 17th, and I am very glad to see that every thing in this affair of Sacheverell has gone to your mind. I pray God that every thing might end so as that we might have quietness. But not only what I observe of the duke of Somerset and Lord Rivers, but more, that of the duke of Shrewsbury, convinces me that he knows he makes his court to the queen. As I am resolved never to depart from the interest of the Whigs, I shall govern myself accordingly, seeing by every thing that the insincerity of the queen is such that it is next to madness, if you or myself should expect any other behaviour than that of ingratitude. This is so disagreeable a subject, that I shall not only now, but at all times forbear speaking of it.

"Out of the list sent of the division in the House of Lords, how were these lords influenced to be for Sacheverell; duke of Northumberland, duke of Hamilton, earl of Pembroke, earl of Suffolk, bishop of Chichester, Lord Berkeley, earl of Northesk, earl of Wemyss, Lord Lexington? I should have thought all these would have been on the other side; and as I know the cautious temper of the duke of Shrewsbury, he would not be brought back to the steps he has done, but that he knew the inclinations of the queen. But that which amazes me is, that he could think it possible for the Tories to be strong enough to ruin the Whigs, in conjunction with the lord treasurer and me.

"Having writ thus far, I have received your two letters of the 20th and 21st, by which I see the behaviour of several lords. I think it has made every thing very plain."

The trial, and the discussions it occasioned, made a deep impression on the public mind, and increased the unpopularity of the Whigs. The most moderate of those who favoured the Revolution disapproved so solemn an agitation of the doctrine of legitimate resistance. For although no one, except the stanch adherents to indefeasible right, could deny that in a free government and a mixed monarchy resistance is lawful when the sovereign evinces a resolution to over-

* The duke of Argyle, as previously stated, voted for the impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell, but opposed ministers on the insignificant sentence passed upon him. Sacheverell seems to have taken this as an intimation of the favourable disposition of his grace towards him; but he was mistaken. The duke of Argyle, hearing that the doctor was going to call upon him to return him thanks, he refused to receive him or his acknowledgments. "Tell him," said the duke, "that what I did in parliament was not done for his sake." (Cunningham, book ii. p. 300.) — Ed.

throw the civil and religious liberties of the country; yet they were adverse to the discussion of a doctrine favourable to those republican notions which had before overturned the throne and the altar. Even the warmest advocates of the Revolution cannot deny that the managers of the impeachment carried their principles to a height which was calculated to afford encouragement to licentiousness and sedition. The prosecution of a clergyman, for the promulgation of doctrines which then found numerous partisans, gave countenance to the clamour which had been so often raised among the high-church party, that the Whigs were pursuing a systematic design to oppress and injure the church. This alarm was caught by some of Marlborough's most devoted partisans; and we find the insinuation strongly expressed by his chaplain, Dr. Hare, in his letters to the duchess.

A no less injury to the cause of the ministers was derived from the manly, but indiscreet manner, in which the Whig managers admitted the legitimacy of the prince of Wales. For it could not be forgotten that the great actors of the Revolution, with true policy, justified this change on the ground of his illegitimacy, in order not to wound public prejudice, or infringe the rule of hereditary right; and all the subsequent acts of parliament had been framed on the same principle. This incautious avowal removed one great restraint, which had hitherto operated on the public mind, and contributed to increase the bias of the queen, who had formerly been prevented from showing her natural inclination to her own family, by the consideration that the alleged illegitimacy of her brother was founded on fact. Her doubts on this subject had been frequently expressed to the duchess of Marlborough; and, therefore, on the present occasion, disliking equally her German successors, and devoted to hereditary right, she could not fail of feeling additional compunction when the veil was inconsiderately withdrawn. In a letter to the duchess of Marlborough, even Dr. Hare mentions the injurious effect which this avowal produced on the public mind, and asserts, that many thousands were alienated by the impolitic discovery.

Meanwhile a general exultation prevailed on the issue of the trial, which produced a sensible effect in transferring to the Tories the popularity which had hitherto been confined

to the Whigs. Sacheverell became the public idol, and aggravated the rising antipathy to the ministry in general, as well as to Marlborough in particular. Even in the course of the process, numbers of the people, as well as many of the nobles and gentry, attended him daily to Westminster-hall, striving to kiss his hand, and praying for his deliverance. As the queen went to the trial, her sedan chair was surrounded by persons of all ranks, exclaiming, "God bless your majesty and the church. We hope that your majesty is for Dr. Sacheverell." His popularity increased, and the great majority of the nation espoused his cause. The clergy, in particular, who were chiefly actuated by congenial sentiments, did not fail to represent him as the champion of the church of England, and to aid him by their addresses from the pulpit. He was likewise surrounded at the trial by the chaplains of the queen.*

The populace in London, and in the principal towns, took as warm a share in this controversy as if it had involved their dearest interests. At the height of the enthusiasm, violent tumults agitated the capital; and it was dangerous to appear without the oak-leaf, which was considered as the badge of hereditary right. It was impossible, indeed, to restore order, without the aid of the military.

The effects of such a general commotion, at this critical period, may be better conceived than described. In fact, as the first movements, which had occurred on the commencement of the discussion, had encouraged the queen to mortify Marlborough in the affair of the regiment, the result far exceeded the most sanguine expectations of her secret advisers, and convinced them that they might now proceed to accomplish that great change, for which she had long panted, as a deliverance from bondage. However mortified at the unfortunate consequences of this impolitic trial, and the decline of his own favour, Marlborough was still more mortified at the increasing coldness between the Whigs and the treasurer, as well as at the extreme impatience which they manifested at his dilatory and cautious temper. The truth was, that the treasurer could not overcome the repugnance of the queen to gratify their demands, and, from delicacy to his royal mistress, he was unwilling to declare the real cause, and no less

* Appendix, note H.

averse to expose his own want of power. Hence the Whigs always suspected his sincerity, when he eluded their importunities; and frequently clamoured for the interposition of the duchess, as the only means of animating his tardiness. These conflicting interests often recoiled upon Marlborough himself, and occasioned equal lukewarmness between him and the Whigs. A few letters from Sunderland indicate this misunderstanding, and show the embarrassments in which Marlborough was involved by the impetuosity of his son-in-law.

To the Duchess.

"*Tuesday morning.* — I am this minute informed that the bishop of Bristol is dead. Upon all accounts Dr. Willis would be the properest person. There are two other men that are very good, whom the lord treasurer says the queen is very well inclined to, — Dr. Mandeville and Dr. Bentley. This is a time that makes this of more consequence than ordinary; so that I beg you would mention it to the lord treasurer as soon as you can, that he may not pretend engagements. If I should speak to him it would do more hurt than good. I am sure you will be so good as to excuse my giving you this trouble, but there was no time to be lost.

"Notwithstanding all the difficulties and disagreeable things that have happened of late, we shall get the better of them all, if we can but entirely cement together Lord Marlborough and the Whigs, which is so necessary and so plain that it can't fail. I am sure I will do my part towards it with the greatest sincerity; and I will only say, he may, if he will, nay, indeed, he must be, the head of our party."

"*Wednesday, six o'clock.* — I had your letter just as I was sitting down to dinner. I found by Mr. Boyle's manner of talking this morning about the business of Sacheverell's sermon, that Lord Marlborough and lord treasurer had spoke to him; for he talked of it with another sort of warmth than ever I heard him. I am more concerned than I can express at what you mention, that Lord Marlborough and lord treasurer should complain of any thing now; and I shan't be easy till I have the honour of seeing you, that I may know what it is; for as I have taken pains that there should be no cause given them of complaint, so I am sure I shall continue to do with all the zeal I am capable of. I must beg, therefore, that you would let me know at what time to-morrow morning I may wait upon you; and if you could in three words just let me know what it is, I should be very thankful, for there is nobody living does wish more their ease and content than I do. And I promise you that whatever you think may contribute towards it, or that you would have me do towards it that is in my power, I will always do; for I shall never forget what our principle and party owe to you, and what I do in particular myself."

To the Duke of Marlborough.

"*Monday, Feb.* 21 . — My lord, I am very glad you and Lady Marlborough got so well to Harwich. I wish the wind would change, that you might not stay long in so disagreeable a place. It is very unfortunate for our home affairs that you were obliged to go away so soon; for lord treasurer has a slowness and coldness about him that is really terrible, and, therefore, all that can be must be done to keep him up, and to animate him. But I am sure it will be impossible to do it without Lady Marlborough, and, therefore, I must beg of you, in the name of all our friends, that you would persuade her to come straight to town, when you are embarked, to keep lord treasurer up to do what is right; for without her I know we shall all sink. I don't mean be out of our places, for that I think will be no mortification to any body of common sense; but, besides the danger to the whole, none of our heads are safe, if we can't get the better of what I am convinced Mrs. Morley designs; and if lord treasurer can but be persuaded to act like a man, I am sure our union and strength is too great to be hurt. Lord president, lord steward, and Lord Orford, have charged me with their compliments and good wishes to you, and do hope and beg you to press this of Lady Marlborough's being in town, as that upon which every thing depends. As any thing happens here worth troubling you with, I shall not fail to acquaint you with it. I wish you good success, and am most dutifully yours."

CHAP. LXXXVIII.— OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN.—1710.

ON his arrival in Holland, Marlborough was again involved in the unwelcome task of interfering in the pending discussion, without the slightest control over the negotiation, and was again exposed to the horrid, but groundless imputation, that he quitted England, not with the olive of peace, but with the firebrand of war. Since the former rupture of the conferences, the king of France had never intermitted his secret correspondence with the pacific party in Holland. His repeated professions of sincerity, and renewal of offers, specious though not explicit, made a deep impression on the minds of the Dutch; and, at his request, Petcum again repaired to Paris, toward the close of the year, for the purpose of receiving his overtures. We find, among the Blenheim Papers, many letters from this meddling envoy to the Duke of Marlborough, from which it appears that the designs of

Louis were illusory, and his propositions vague and ambiguous.

This journey was, therefore, fruitless; and in the course of the winter, the most active preparations were made for the continuance of the war. Still, however, the French monarch persisted in renewing his overtures; and, in the commencement of the year, sent another project, through Petcum, to the Dutch plenipotentiaries, which was likewise rejected as equally vague, and unaccompanied with any additional concession. Notwithstanding this failure, he still persisted in his purpose. After many propositions to the Dutch, through Petcum, arrangements were made for the renewal of the congress, on the condition that Louis should accept all the preliminaries, except the 37th article, for which he professed his readiness to offer a satisfactory equivalent. Accordingly, meetings took place at Moerdyke, between Buys and Vanderdussen, on the part of the States, and the Marshal d'Uxelles and the Abbot de Polignac on that of France.

Marlborough reached the Hague the very day on which the plenipotentiaries returned from their conference. Their report was made to him, Lord Townshend, Zinzendorf, the grand pensionary, and the deputies of the States, and was solemnly communicated on the following day to all the ministers of the allies. Little hopes, being, however, entertained of a satisfactory conclusion, orders were issued for accelerating the military preparations, and the foreign ministers were enjoined to request their respective sovereigns to send their contingents into the field as early as possible, as the most effectual means of forcing the common enemy to agree to a safe and lasting peace.

Meanwhile the Dutch plenipotentiaries repaired to Gertruydenberg, which was the place appointed for the continuance of the conferences.

As on the former occasion, conferences followed conferences, and various attempts were made to modify the 37th article, which effectually promoted the views of Louis, by creating divisions among his antagonists; for in the course of the discussions between the allied ministers on this momentous point, the jarring interests of the different parties were called into action.

Buys and Vanderdussen vehemently censured the severe

terms which the allies demanded, and observed, that it was not in human nature to expect that the king of France could accede to them. After some struggle, the Dutch were inclined to agree to a partition, and to gratify the king of France with the cession of Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia to the duke of Anjou, in lieu of Spain and the Indies. In the course of the conferences, the French plenipotentiaries availed themselves of this inclination, and contended for some compensation of this kind; and the pensionary did not scruple to assert, that it would be happy if peace could be purchased by the cession of Sicily. Godolphin and Somers were of the same opinion, and even Marlborough did not hesitate to hint his approbation, provided the evacuation of Spain could be secured. But these concessions were strenuously opposed by the house of Austria and the duke of Savoy.

Zinzendorf presented a strong memorial to the pensionary and Marlborough, declaring that the house of Austria would never suffer the smallest portion of the Spanish territories in Italy to be ceded to a Bourbon prince, and announced the resolution of his imperial master rather to perish with arms in his hands, than submit to a partition which would prove his inevitable ruin. He urged that the continuance of the general war was the only certain means of securing the fulfilment of the preliminaries, and earnestly appealed to the experience of the allies, whether the same perfidious monarch, who had broken the most solemn treaties, would, at this time, more religiously adhere to promises reluctantly yielded in the hour of necessity.*

King Charles not only made similar remonstrances, but reiterated his demand of Roussillon, and the other provinces which had been wrested from Spain since the peace of the Pyrennees.

The duke of Savoy, who grasped at the possession of Sicily, followed their example, by strenuously contending that the slightest dismemberment of any portion of the Spanish monarchy would be a flagrant breach of his treaty with the Emperor Leopold, which had been approved and sanctioned by the allies.

* History of the House of Austria, vol. iii. chap. 77. (Bohn's Standard Library.) Lamberti, tome vi. pp. 37—49.

In other views of this question the same discordance prevailed. The emperor, though so strongly averse to the slightest cession, would have accepted the suggestion of France for a separate peace, provided the securities she offered were likely to be faithfully accomplished; and Eugene even declared that the conquest of Spain, when left to its own resources, might be effected in less than two years. In this opinion Godolphin was disposed to concur, and Marlborough did not object to an arrangement which he had himself supported the preceding year; though both justly doubted whether the other allies would fulfil any engagement which they might be induced to form for the purpose. The Dutch, on the contrary, strongly objected to a measure which they considered as inefficient and illusory, and protested against any peace which was not general and conclusive.

In the course of the discussions, the expedients proposed by the French ministers dissipated the illusion which had hitherto prevailed among the advocates for an immediate cessation of arms. Louis, indeed, redoubled his proposals and professions of sincerity, and avowing his utter inability to enforce the evacuation of Spain, offered successively to recall his troops, to withdraw all assistance, to contribute, by subsidies, to the prosecution of the war in Spain, and finally, as a pledge of his good faith, to yield four cautionary towns to the possession of the allies. But as they were well aware that he was secretly encouraging his grandson to persevere, and as he objected to deliver up such fortresses as the allies required, the most strenuous advocates for a separate peace began to suspect his sincerity.

This suspicion influenced the result of the deliberations. His different offers were successively rejected, and the demands of the allies were renewed on the same basis as in the preceding year; namely, that no modification could be admitted of the 37th article, and that the king must, either by persuasion or force, procure the cession of the whole Spanish monarchy within the space of two months. The effect of this determination was the same as on the former occasion. Louis protested against the indignity and inhumanity of such conditions, and again appealed to the feelings and loyalty of his people; while the allies justified their demands on the plea of his former insincerity, and the utter ineffi-

ciency of the different expedients which he had successively proposed.

It still, however, appears to have been the opinion of Godolphin and the Whig lords, that the distresses of his people would compel the French monarch to submit to these severe conditions; and we find an unequivocal proof of this fact from a passage in the diary of Lord Chancellor Cowper.

"During the remaining transactions of the intended peace, which was laid in all its steps before the whole cabinet, lord treasurer, Lord President Somers, and all other lords, did ever seem confident of a peace. My own distrust was so remarkable, that I was once perfectly chid by the lord treasurer, (never so much in any other case), for saying such orders would be proper if the French king signed the preliminary treaty. He resented my making a question of it, and said there could be no doubt, &c. For my part, nothing but seeing so great men believe it could ever incline me to think France reduced so low as to accept such conditions."*

Unfortunately, the opinion of these sagacious statesmen, though well founded, was not verified; for the distracted state of parties in England, and the prospect of the impending changes in the administration, encouraged Louis to struggle yet longer with his embarrassments, and to wait the event of the political conflict which was rapidly approaching to a crisis.

In this whole transaction, we find Marlborough still more implicitly than before conforming to the dictates of the British cabinet, and cautiously abstaining, by word and deed, from subjecting himself to the slightest responsibility. He even pressed Godolphin to prolong the session of parliament, by short prorogations, that the whole course of the proceeding might be submitted to the approbation of the legislature, from the conviction, as he himself observes, that he should be exposed to equal danger in rejecting or accepting the proffered terms of peace; and he emphatically styles himself *white paper*, upon which the treasurer and his friends may write their directions. We have likewise the positive assertion of Torcy, who, in the former congress, accused the duke of breaking off the negotiation, that in this year the rupture was owing entirely to the cabals of Count Zinzendorf.†

* Hardwicke Papers. † Note to Petcum, Aug. 10. 1710. MS.

After the proofs which have been adduced on this point, we trust that the pages of history will no longer be disgraced by the malicious imputations of party rancour; and that Marlborough will no longer be held up to public indignation as the firebrand of war. We can farther assert, with confidence, that at this period he was not only not the arbiter of peace, but that he did not even control the operations of the war; for we find proofs in his correspondence, that he was often not consulted, and frequently thwarted on the most important occasions. Nor was he any longer the conductor of foreign negotiations. The consciousness of his own declining power induced him to abstain, as much as possible, from interference in every other branch of service, and to confine himself to the immediate circle of his own command. Two or three instances from his letters to the treasurer will be sufficient to prove, that he was often not even consulted in the negotiations relating to military arrangements, or in warlike operations not directly under his cognisance.

"*March* 18.—* * * * I think every body is convinced that the chief design of France is to cause a division among the allies. The imperialists are very desirous of making a peace with France, upon the condition they offer of giving four cautionary towns in this country; and the States-general are positive in putting an end to the war at once, by giving the duke of Anjou a *partage*. I am afraid the French are not ignorant of these two opinions, by which they are the better able to amuse and cheat us. Lord Townshend and I shall be sure to follow the orders we shall receive."

"*Hague, March* 28.—* * * * I find by your last letter that you think every thing may be finished, so as that the parliament might put an end to the sessions about the 10th of next month. I desire you will let the queen know I shall use my utmost diligence that she may have it in her power before that time to acquaint the parliament, so that she might have their opinion; but if it should so happen, that neither the French nor these people will speak so plain, as may give her Majesty the advantage of laying the whole before parliament, I do then earnestly beg, for the good of the service, that the adjournments may be very short; for you may depend upon it, that the intention of this republic is, to continue the negotiations, in hopes of persuading the allies to consent to what France shall agree for the duke of Anjou, in order to have a general peace. You will see by the enclosed papers, given by Count Zinzendorf to the pensioner and myself, the intentions of the court of Vienna. I do not doubt of Count Gallas having his orders agreeable to these papers; but you must be careful not to let him know the queen's intentions; for Lord Townshend and myself have a very difficult part to act so as not to give offence. The letters from Vienna say, that Prince Eugene was not

to leave that town till the 23d, so that we do not expect him till the end of next month."

"*May* 16. 1710.—* * * * I have received the favour of your two letters, and as soon as I can see a probability of renewing the negotiations at the Hague, I shall write to Lord Townshend, as you and Count Maffei desire. By the last post Mr. Secretary acquaints us, that he had acquainted M. Spurnheim that her Majesty was willing to recommend to the parliament, next winter, her part of the hundred thousand crowns, for the renewing the treaty for the troops in Italy. When the proposition was made to me at the Hague, I did immediately tell both Schmettau and Grumbkow, that it was so very unreasonable that they ought not to insist on any thing of that kind but at the court of Vienna; so that the king of Prussia will be angry with me, and pleased with your resolutions in England, which, if the war should last, will occasion you many more troubles of this kind. For as my business every where, during this war, has been to save as much as possible the queen's and public's money, they will be sure to make their applications where they shall find it most easy.

"Lord Raby is also very unjustly angry with me, that he is not treating, as he calls it, at the Hague. But as long as I am sure that I do what is best for the service, I shall be very little wounded at what he and some others think. * * * *

"I dare not speak against the project of sending troops to the West Indies, the cabinet council thinking it very reasonable; but to you I will own very freely, that I think it can end in nothing but a great expense, and the ruining of those regiments. Besides, nothing that can be done there will forward the peace; and if we can be so fortunate as to have them here, we may have, by one dash of a pen, much more than any expeditions can give in many years. But what I write is only for yourself; for, as I have not been advised with, I beg my name may not be used."

"*May* 19. — Since my last I have had the favour of yours of the 28th, by which I see the intentions of a West India voyage. If I had known sooner of that project, you should have known my particular thoughts, which I writ by the last post, upon hearing of it *by accident*. Though I do not care to meddle with what is not immediately under my particular care, yet I can't forbear saying by the experience I have had, of expeditions in the last reign, as well as this, that it is next to impossible that this can end in any thing but an expense to make you uneasy, the ruining of the regiments, and the increasing the debt of the ordnance. You know very well that these considerations give real uneasiness to nobody but you and me, nobody caring how the debt increases, or how any thing succeeds, so as that their parties do not suffer. I cannot be of this humour; for as long as I am in business, I must say and do what I think is for the service; so that you will excuse the trouble I give you, for I know finding fault must have that effect. What you say as to the different humours of people, I believe is but too true; but as you have with prudence and patience suffered hitherto, I think you must not be disheartened."

All expectations of an immediate peace being dissipated, Marlborough prepared to take the field, before the enemy could assemble their troops, with the hopes that success would effect what negotiations could not accomplish.

The plan of the campaign was concerted by the two commanders on a scale the most grand and efficient that had been formed since the commencement of the war, and if executed with vigour, skill, and concert, must have produced commensurate success.

In the Netherlands, it was proposed to commence with the siege of Douay, an important fortress on the Scheldt, which was connected by water communications even with Amsterdam, and admirably calculated to form a place of arms for the invasion of France. Their forces were then to be directed against Arras, the last in the triple line of fortresses, which covered the French frontier on the north, and which would open the way to Paris. Collaterally with this plan, a project was laid for the surprise of Calais, for which purpose a secret correspondence had been established with the mayor. But, on the discovery of the plot, the attempt was deferred, and the grand operations of the campaign were to be aided by a descent on the coast, which was to terminate in a combined attack against Abbeville. The capture of this place would leave the allies masters of the whole tract from Arras to the sea, and enable them to close the campaign by the reduction of Boulogne and Calais.

To aid this mighty effort in the Netherlands, the army on the Rhine was to be reduced to such a scale as was merely sufficient for defence; and the command was accordingly relinquished to Count Groenfeld, a subordinate general, by the elector of Hanover, who would have deemed his dignity compromised, by continuing at the head of an inactive force.

In the south-eastern part of France, the operations were planned on a scale no less grand and effective than in the Netherlands.

From Piedmont the confederates were to penetrate into the valley of Barcelonette, on the confines of Dauphiné, to traverse the Durance, and take up their position at Gap, preserving their communication by a cordon of troops, posted at Pontis, Echalette, Orres, and Paillon. On their irruption, the disaffected and persecuted Protestants of Dauphiné were

to assemble at Dye, where they were to find a magazine of arms, and a body of refugee officers, to organise their ranks.

In concert with this invasion, a descent was to be effected at Cette, on the coast of Languedoc, under the count de Seissan, a French officer of great skill and merit, who had quitted the service of Louis in disgust, and was well acquainted with the country and inhabitants. With the support of these troops, an insurrection was to take place in the neighbouring districts, as far as the Cevennes, so long the focus of disaffection. The insurgents were to form communications with each other along the Drome, through the valley of Crette, and by the Vivarais. Thus the fortresses of Sisteron, Seyne, and Digne, which were in their rear, would fall without resistance; and the communication with Provence would not only be intercepted, but the discontented population of this mountainous region would be embodied to aid the efforts of the invading army.*

In the midst of these operations, the central provinces of Spain, under the dominion of Philip, were to be assailed by the armies of Portugal and Catalonia, who were to effect a junction in the vicinity of Madrid.

Notwithstanding the hopes which these grand and concerted operations might naturally have inspired, the mind of the great commander appeared to sink under the weight of his cares and embarrassments; and both during his stay at the Hague, as well as in his journey to the army, we find him writing to the duchess in a style of unusual despondency.

"*Hague, April* 14.—I leave this letter to go by to-morrow's post. I am very sorry to tell you, that the behaviour of the French looks as if they had no other desire than that of carrying on the war. I hope God will be pleased to bless this campaign, for I see nothing else that can give us peace, either at home or abroad. I am so discouraged by every thing I see, that I have never, during this war, gone into the field with so heavy a heart as I do at this time. I own to you that the present humours in England give me a good deal of trouble; for I cannot see how it is possible they should mend, till every thing is yet worse.

"I had by the last post an address from Gloucester† sent me. I am impatient to know the manner it will be received; for should it receive

* In the Memoirs of Berwick this plan is detailed from the specific information which the marshal obtained from some of the insurgents, tom. ii. pp. 100—103.

† Alluding to one of the violent addresses in favour of Sacheverell.

any encouragement, I fear it may be of dangerous consequence. My fears now are for my country, and not for myself; for I have taken my resolution of suffering with those whom I am now joined withal."

"*Tournay, April* 19.—* * * * I came to this place yesterday, and to-morrow we shall have good part of the army together, so that by Monday, which is the post-day, I may be able to give you some account of the dispositions of the enemy; for a great deal of the good or bad success of this campaign will very much depend upon what we shall be able to do in four or five days.

"We are already sensible of the difficulties we shall meet with in making the army subsist till the 20th of May; but our hopes are, that the French will meet with more difficulty to make theirs subsist. We are engaged, and we must do our best, and be contented to suffer a little, we being one month sooner in the field than naturally we should be. The troops must suffer, but I hope the common cause will be the better for it. There is no uneasiness but I would bear, when it gives the least prospect of ease hereafter; for the enjoying of quietness and your company is my greatest ambition.

"I should be glad, if you are in London, that you would give Mr. Maynwaring the trouble of speaking to some of the Custom-house, I having sent, by Captain Saunders, one picture and some looking-glasses. They are not of any value; but I find, among other marks of declining favour, that I must meet with trouble at the Custom-house. The best way will be to send nothing more from hence; for every thing may be had in England, perhaps a little dearer."*

"*Tournay, the 20th.*—The post being obliged to go this afternoon, I have nothing more to write, but that we have forced the enemy to surrender Mortagne, which they had taken from us the day before we came here. I hope we shall be able to march this night, so as to be at the enemy's lines to-morrow.

"I hope to date my next on the other side of the lines."

The trifling conquest of Mortagne was the prelude to the grand operations of the campaign. Marlborough and Eugene having joined at Tournay, put themselves at the head of the army, which had already assembled to the amount of 60,000 men, and was expected to be shortly augmented to nearly double that number.

The difficulty of attacking Douay was similar to that which had been experienced before the siege of Tournay, the place being protected by one of those powerful combina-

* His dissatisfaction at this period was so great, that we find him bitterly complaining of his irksome situation to Mr. Walpole:—"I am extremely obliged to you for the account you give of the queen's present temper, which I believe to be such, that if I considered only myself I would not serve one minute longer."—*Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, 4to., vol. ii. p. 12.

tions of nature and art, which so frequently occur in the Netherlands. On one hand ran the Haine and the Scarpe, in the centre was the canal of Douay, and on the other, the lines of La Bassée, which had been strengthened with additional works since the close of the campaign. These lines were guarded by 40 battalions and 20 squadrons, under Marshal Montesquiou. Marlborough was apprehensive that the operation of forcing them would be attended with considerable loss; but as farther delay would enable the enemy to collect a greater strength for their protection, it was determined that the attack should instantly commence. "The orders," he writes to Godolphin, "are given for the army's marching this night, so that I hope my next will give you an account of our being in Artois; for if they can hinder our passing the lines, it will put us under very great difficulties, and very much dishearten our friends at the Hague. On all the French frontiers, they talk of nothing but war, so that we suppose our next letters from Holland will be, that the French are gone from Gertruydenberg. God send us success."

In conformity with this determination, the army moved to Villemeau on the 20th of April, and active preparations were immediately made to prosecute their designs, by securing the passages over the Upper Dyle and the canal of Douay, which formed part of the French line of defence. With this view, the duke detached the prince of Wurtemberg, with 15,000 men, by Pont à Tressin to Pont à Vendin, where the lines abutted on the Dyle and the canal of Douay; and Prince Eugene sent Count Fels, with a considerable corps, towards Pont Auby, on the same canal. The whole army followed by wings in four columns, the right commanded by Marlborough, and the left by Eugene. On the route, the British general received the welcome intelligence that his detachment had secured the passage at Pont à Vendin, without resistance. He therefore pushed forward, and crossed at the head of his columns.

Eugene, finding that the passage of Pont Auby was impracticable, traversed the canal at the bridges of Saut and Courières with equal facility and success. The same evening, the two wings united in the plains of Lens, near Montigny, Marshal Montesquiou having precipitately withdrawn,

with the greater part of the force under his command, behind the Scarpe, near Vitry.

The troops lay on their arms, and early next morning, notwithstanding their fatigue, Marlborough, with the right, advanced towards the Scarpe, and the enemy retreating precipitately behind the Senzet, took post between Vitry and Gouy, and established his head-quarters at Goeulzin. He instantly despatched General Cadogan to occupy Pont à Rache, on the canal of Marchiennes, in order to circumscribe the garrison of Douay on the north. Meanwhile, Eugene, encamping on the other side of the Scarpe, from Auby to Equerchin, completed the investment on the west. The letters of the duke express his joy and surprise at this great and unexpected success; as he observes, that had the lines been well defended, the occupation of them would have been purchased with the loss of many thousand brave men.* To the duchess he writes in the same strain:—

"*Lens, April* 21.—In my last I had but just time to tell you that we had passed the lines. I hope this happy beginning will produce such success this campaign as must put an end to the war. I bless God for putting it into their heads not to defend their lines; for at Pont de Vendin, where I passed, the Mareschal d'Artagnan was with 20,000 men, which, if he had stayed, must have made it very doubtful. But, God be praised, we are come here without the loss of any men. The excuse the French make is, that we came four days before they expected us. We have had for some time extremely fine weather, which will be a great happiness if it continues."

"*April* 22.—This day we have again obliged the French army to quit the Scarpe, so that to-morrow we shall invest the town of Douay, and then we may give some rest to the poor soldiers, who have had none since last Sunday."

"*April* 24.—You may see by the several dates that I have every day attempted to write, but have been always disturbed. Now that we have invested Douay, for near a fortnight we shall have very little to do, but the trouble of making the army subsist, for till the 8th of May we shall not have our cannon. As we have now succeeded beyond our expectation, we shall, in a little time, see if lord treasurer judges right, as to our having a peace. I wish for one with all my soul, but I fear the French have taken their resolution of making this campaign. God bless you, and may he give me some time to live quietly with you, is my daily prayers."

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* From the account in the Gazettes, and letter of the duke to secretary Boyle, April 23.—State Paper Office.

The lines of circumvallation were begun on the 25th, and were nearly completed on the 28th, when both armies made a movement. For the sake of subsistence, and the security of the convoys, the allied cavalry was posted from Auby, through Rasche, to Bouvigny. The infantry was then so stationed as to encircle the place: the line of Eugene stretching from Pont Auby, through Equerchin, to Brebieres; that of Marlborough from thence, through Corbehem, to Ferin, Dechy, Sain, and Waziere. The investment being thus completed, the infantry entered the lines of circumvallation, and preparations were made for the attacks.

Douay was a fortress of considerable strength in the second line of defence, which covered the frontier of Artois. Though less populous than Lille, it embraced a larger circuit. It is situated on a plain, and traversed by the Scarpe, which, on the side of Tournay, renders the surrounding marshes impracticable in rainy seasons. Within the distance of cannon-shot, and between the river and the canal, is fort Scarpe, an irregular pentagon, surrounded with a wet ditch, and fortified by three half-moons, a covered way, and an outward fosse, with sluices to form an inundation.

The command of Douay was confided to the marquis of Albergotti, an officer of acknowledged bravery and experience, and under his orders were three other generals: the celebrated Valory headed the engineers, and the chevalier de Jaucourt the artillery. The garrison amounted to nearly 8000 men.

From such a force, directed by consummate skill, and favoured by the natural strength of the place, which was well supplied with provisions and ammunition, an obstinate defence was naturally expected. Fortunately, the allies were left uninterrupted in their preliminary measures, from the inability of the enemy to take the field; and their operations were only delayed by the want of the battering train and ammunition.

The customary arrangements and preparations being made, the trenches were opened on the night of the 5th of May. Two attacks were formed, one against the gate of Equerchin, on the west, and the other against that of Ocre, toward the north, embracing a tongue of land bordered on each side by inundations. The attacks were directed by the prince of

Orange, and the prince of Anhalt Dessau, who had recently joined the army at the head of the Prussian troops; the latter having 40 battalions and as many squadrons under his command, and the former 20.

On the 7th, in the morning, the parallels were advanced within 250 paces of the pallisades; but during the ensuing night, the besiegers experienced a severe check, from a sally of 1000 grenadiers and 200 dragoons, under the Spanish general, the duke of Montemar. The regiment of Sutton, which covered the workmen, was nearly cut to pieces, and that of Smith also suffered greatly. But by the arrival of fresh forces, the assailants were repulsed and driven back with considerable loss. On the 9th, the great train of artillery, which had been so long expected, reached the camp. It consisted of 200 pieces of cannon, including 80 24-pounders; and a large supply of ammunition was procured at the same time from Tournay.

The approaches proceeded with redoubled spirit, and on the 11th the besiegers not only reached the outer ditch, but erected a battery of 24 pieces of cannon and 8 mortars at each attack, and, on the 21st, carried on their approaches to the covert-way.

The increasing danger of Douay stimulated the French court to great exertions, in order to assemble the army, that the place might not fall without, at least, an effort for its relief; and Villars prepared to assume the command. Before his arrival he threatened, with his usual spirit of gasconade, to relieve the fortress, even at the risk of a general engagement; and in his correspondence with his court he expressed the most sanguine hopes of success. On the 20th of May the French army was assembled in the vicinity of Cambray.* Villars was accompanied by the pretender, and Marshals Montesquiou and Berwick were appointed to re-

* It is difficult to ascertain the real number of the French. At the time of his advance, Villars, for the purpose of appalling the allies, swelled its amount to 160,000 men; and in his Memoirs, with a view to diminish the shame of his retreat, says that the confederates were superior by 40,000. Probably the numbers of both armies were nearly equal. According to Lediard, the right wing, under Eugene, consisted of 45 battalions, and 101 squadrons; the left, under Marlborough, of 110 battalions, and 161 squadrons: total 155 battalions, and 262 squadrons.

lieve him from the labours of his post, in consequence of his wound, from which he was scarcely recovered. He commenced his movements by pushing a part of his left near Arleux, and seizing the castle of Oisy; at the same time throwing bridges over the Scheldt, as if he intended to attack the quarters of the Dutch troops between that river and the Scarpe, in the vicinity of Dechy. Having attempted to divert the attention of the allies by this feint, he marched by Marquion and Vis upon Arras; and after collecting additional reinforcements, threw eight bridges over the Scarpe, between Athies and Avesnes. He passed the river on the 30th, and entered into the plains of Lens, at the head of 153 battalions and 262 squadrons, encamping between Eloi and Roquelincourt, near Arras, with the intention of throwing succours into Douay, on the side of Lens.

Meanwhile, the allied generals had not been neglectful of their usual precautions. They had already marked defensive positions on each side of the Scarpe; one crossing the road to Valenciennes, from Arleux towards the Scarpe, the other from Vitry to Montigny, between the Upper Scarpe and the canal of Douay. These posts were defended by lines flanked with redans, and mounted with cannon; while reinforcements were drawn from the neighbouring garrisons.

On the 24th the confederate army made a movement, encamping between Isez les Equerchins and Arleux, to be equally distant from both of the intrenched camps. They left only 30 battalions at the siege, and 12 squadrons at Pont à Rache. Twenty bridges were thrown over the Upper Scarpe, and roads were made, of sufficient width for the march of the army in columns, in either direction.

On the 25th, when the advance of the French into the plains of Lens became decisive, the allied army prepared to move to the intrenched camp, already marked out on the left of the Scarpe. On the 28th Eugene took up a more compact position, from Montigny towards Beaumont; while Marlborough, crossing the Scarpe, placed his left at Vitry, and extended his right towards Equerchin. The Dutch traversed the Scarpe on the 29th and 30th, and formed the line of communication between the armies of Eugene and Marlborough. Ten palatine regiments, arriving from Juliers, were charged to guard the post of Pont à Vendin. The

redans of the position were connected on the 31st by an intrenched line, extended from Vitry to Montigny; the artillery mounted in batteries 400 paces distant from each other; the infantry placed in a single line along the intrenchment; and the cavalry, by brigades, in two lines, 700 paces behind. The prince of Orange, with 20 battalions, from the siege, and 12 others from the intrenchments between Dechy and Frerin, also joined; and the whole army firmly waited, in this position, the attack of the enemy; the head-quarters of Marlborough being at Equerchin, and those of Eugene at Henin Lietard.

On the 1st of June the French commanders moved, with the hope of forcing this position, and encamped between Fampoux and Noyelles, near Lens, the head-quarters of Villars being at Werval. They advanced at the head of a strong escort to Betricourt, within musket-shot of the allied lines, to reconnoitre; but even Villars found them unassailable. Accordingly, after continuing to manœuvre four days in presence of his antagonists, he made a movement, his right still resting near Fampoux, on the Scarpe, and his left retrograding about a league towards Vimy, with Arras in his rear. Berwick, perceiving no prospect of a battle, quitted the Low Countries, for his command in Dauphiné.

We give, in regular order, the letters of the British general, which indicate his feelings at this crisis.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 12.—By our last letters from the Hague, we conclude the negotiations of Gertruydenberg to be ended; so that it must be the operations of this campaign that must renew the negotiations, which I hope God will so bless, that if the queen should not be so happy as to have a prospect of peace, before the opening of the next session of parliament, that I shall do my endeavours that she and all her subjects may be convinced that we do our best here in the army, to put a speedy and good period to this bloody war. The Marshal Villars is expected in two or three days at Cambray, he being to leave Paris this day. After his arrival we shall, by his motions, be able to judge of his orders, which most people think are to venture a battle, rather than to lose this town, which, if the war continues, must be of fatal consequences to them; for we shall bring all our stores of war to this place, which we can do, even from Amsterdam, by water. We do not hear only from the Hague, but from Paris also, that they flatter themselves that our divisions in England must turn to their advantage; they also have great expectations of success in Spain. We have marked a camp on the plains of Lens,

where we intend to receive them, if the marshal shall continue in his resolution of marching on that side. In a day or two we shall mark another, on the side of Bouchain and Valenciennes, so that whatever side they shall think fit to attempt the relief on, we shall be in readiness. If they will venture, this battle must be given in such plains, as that the success will decide the fate of France; so that till I see it, I can't think they will be so rash as to venture all on the success of two hours; if they do, may the Almighty be on our side, shall be the prayer of yours."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 19. — Since my last, I have had the pleasure of yours of the 10th, and I take this occasion of thanking you for the method you take of sending me several letters, which have given me a good deal of insight into what is doing in England. The enclosed is what you desired should be sent back; but you have not, in any of yours, mentioned what it is that the duke of Somerset said or did to you, which this letter does no otherwise explain, than by calling it unreasonable and disagreeable to me. I hear of so many disagreeable things, that make it very reasonable both for myself and you, to take no steps but what may lead to a quiet life. This being the case, am I not to be pitied, that am every day in danger of exposing my life for the good of those who are seeking my ruin? God's will be done. If I can be so blest as to end this campaign with success, things must very much alter to persuade me to come again at the head of the army.

"You will hear by the letters of this post, that the French marched with the resolution to have atacked us last Friday, but when they came in sight of us their minds changed, finding us much stronger encamped than they were. They have sent an express to the king of France, with their reasons for not attacking, of which I have sent a copy to lord treasurer."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 19.—* * * * If M. Villars makes good his threats of venturing a battle, I should yet hope, that before this campaign is ended, we might have a sure prospect of a good peace. If we have not action till the end of this month I shall esteem it a happiness; for by that time we shall have all our troops, except the palatines, and even 4000 of them will be here in the first week of the next month. As the French continue to draw their troops from Dauphiné and the Rhine, to strengthen their army here, Prince Eugene has writ to Vienna, that we might have from the Rhine two imperial regiments of horse and one of foot. Though they should consent, we must not expect these troops till the month of July; but, by it, you will observe that we do all that is in our power for the strengthening this army; for here it is where the fate of this war will be decided; and, I think, that this campaign must do it, which makes me more cheerfully bear the age of threescore."

"*May* 22. — * * * * This minute they bring me word that the French have passed the Scheldt, and are marching this way; they must make one motion more if they will attack us. Whatever may be the success, pray assure the queen that, for her sake, as well as my own, I

shall do my best; for, if we have a battle, this must decide the fate of almost all Christendom. The duke of Berwick came to the army yesterday, so that they have now four marshals, Villars, Berwick, Artagnan, and Arco. Since their passing the river, most of our officers are of opinion they will venture a battle; but the consequences may be so very great, that till I see them engaged, I shall be in doubt; but if we must fight, may the great God of battles give us success! I am for ever yours."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 26.—* * * The Marshal de Villars is very bountiful in his threats, he having a numerous army; but we have had so much time to take our precautions, that I am very confident we shall oblige him to be a spectator of the loss of this town, though we apprehend it may hold out till the 10th of next month. You will have heard of the cardinal de Bouillon's coming to the enemy's camp. He did, two days ago, with a letter to the king of France, in which he sent him back the order of the St. Esprit, and his quitting the office of lord almoner of France. The letter is writ with such strong expressions as I should think will make the king of France very angry. This cardinal may be of use to the emperor and the king of Spain at Rome, where he intends to go; otherwise I see no other advantage this can be to the common cause. The neighbourhood of the French may make some write so as may alarm you. But pray believe me, that our situation at this time is so advantageous, we shall have no action before the taking of this place, unless they act contrary to reason, which were to be wished; for, in all probability, we should have the advantage, which would put a happy end to the war. I am ever yours."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*May* 26.—* * * Marshal Villars's army increases every day; those that are not yet come have ground marked for them in the line, which is above eight miles long. He gives out that his army will be 160,000 strong. It is certain they have a great number of battalions; but I believe, by the sickness they have at this time in their foot, we have as many men as they. We have taken such precaution for the making the ground advantageous to us, that it were to be wished he would make good his threats of attacking us; for, with the blessing of God, we might then hope for such success as might put a happy and glorious end to the war.

"The pensioner writes to me that he knows for certain that the king of France has not only given full powers to the Marshal de Villars to fight, but has also encouraged him to venture any thing for the saving of this town, they being resolved to make an end to the war this summer; so that if those at Gertruydenberg can't agree, we shall have a very active, campaign.

"I am this day threescore; but, I thank God, I find myself in so good health, that I hope to end this campaign without being sensible of the inconveniences of old age."

To the Duchess.

"*May* 29.—* * * The continual motions of the French army have given me very little rest for these last two nights, so that as soon as I have despatched the post I shall go to bed, in hopes of getting five or six hours' sleep; for as the Marshal de Villars is now camped, I shall be obliged, for some time, to be on horseback at break of day. The imperial recruits are come this day, so that now we only want the palatines and one regiment of Prussian horse. Though I have no opinion of your West India project, and that more troops here would be of use; yet as the factions in England now are, I do beg there may be no thoughts of sending them hither; for I had much rather venture my life with too few troops, than to have villains insinuate that any other service is neglected in order to strengthen this army. I am so sleepy that I can write no more."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*June* 2.—* * * You will know by my letter to Mr. Secretary that the marshal had made his disposition, and marched on Friday last with a resolution to attack us; but when he had viewed and seen the strength of our camp, by the advice of his generals he camped where he now is.

"The enclosed is what was sent to the king of France two days ago. If the court should insist on attacking, his army is so near that he may be with us in two hours' time; however, we think ourselves so securely posted, that we have sent the troops back for the carrying on of the siege. You will see by the sense of the councils of war, that if there be no peace, we must have a battle. Our project was to have attacked Arras as soon as the siege should have been over; but the French having drawn many more troops together than we could have imagined, which gives them, certainly, a great superiority, as to their numbers, which will make another siege impossible till we have obliged them to send some of their troops into their garrisons, or decided the fate of Europe by a battle. I thank God I have my health; but what I hear from your side of the water gives me so much uneasiness that I am not so fully pleased with those sanguine thoughts as formerly, that God would protect and bless us; but with all my soul I pray he may, and shall very freely venture my life that we may have success, which is necessary, not only for the preventing of the ruin of England, but of all Europe; for, should the French get the better, you may depend on it, that Holland is so alarmed by our divisions in England, that they would consent to whatever peace France should insist upon. I desire the enclosed account may not be made public, it being given me by the same person which gave me the first account of the intended invasion for Scotland, as also the siege of Brussels."

"*June* 12.—We have since our last letters received three posts from England, those of the 16th, 19th, and 23d, by which I saw you had only received ours of the 29th. By our next you will have seen that the Marshal de Villars had not been able to keep his word to the king of France, in giving a battle. If their resolution holds of venturing one, this country, being all plains, it must be very decisive. I long for an

end of the war, so God's will be done; whatever the event may be, I shall have nothing to reproach myself, having, with all my heart, done my duty, and being hitherto blessed with more success than was ever known before. My wishes and duty are the same; but I can't say that I have the same sanguine prophetic spirit I did use to have; for in all the former actions I did never doubt of success, we having had constantly the great blessing of being of one mind. I cannot say it is so now; for I fear some are run so far into villanous faction, that it would give them more content to see us beaten; but, if I live, I will be so watchful, that it shall not be in their power to do much hurt. The discourse of the duke of Argyle is, that when I please there will then be a peace. I suppose his friends speak the same language in England, so that I must every summer venture my life in a battle, and be found fault with in the winter for not bringing home peace, though I wish for it with all my heart and soul. If we have a battle, and success, that must put a happy end to this too bloody war; after which I shall contemn faction, and not be uneasy at the ambition of any body, but have a perfect satisfaction in that of having done my duty to my queen and country."

To Lord Godolphin.

"*June* 16. — * * * I observe some of your last letters mention the advices continue from Scotland, of the Jacobites expecting a landing. I can assure you that nothing looks like it at Dunkirk; nor do I believe, at this time, France has any other design but that of strengthening their army here, in order, by that, to oblige Holland to think it their interest to accept of a peace, rather than venture a battle that might be decisive. My last quarters infected a great many of my servants, by which I have lost Groffy, my steward, and poor Turliar *; but the rest are recovering. It is impossible, without seeing it, to be sensible of the misery of this country, at least one-half of the people of the villages, since the beginning of last winter, are dead, and the rest look as if they came out of their graves. It is so mortifying, that no Christian can see it, but must, with all his heart, wish for a speedy peace."

After the unsuccessful attempt of the French, the siege was prosecuted with vigour, and, on the 16th, signals of distress from the town announced to Villars the extreme necessity to which it was reduced. He therefore made a demonstration of relieving it on the left side of the Scarpe by re-crossing over his former bridges, and taking post between Arras and the castle of Oisy, near Arleux. To counteract this movement, Marlborough re-passed the Scarpe at Vitry, and took up his position at Gouelzin. Eugene continued to press the siege, and at the same time adopted measures to co-operate with his colleague, in case the enemy should venture to make a serious attack.

* The duke's favourite dog.

On the 22d of June the trenches were opened before fort Scarpe, and carried on by sap; and on the 26th, terms of capitulation were settled, both for that place and the town. The garrison was allowed to march out with all the honours of war, on the condition of being exchanged, with other favourable advantages. The confederate generals applauded their spirited defence, and paid a due tribute of respect to the gallantry of Albergotti, who had retarded the surrender, until his garrison was reduced to 4500 effective men, and preparations were made for a general assault.

He announces the surrender, in a letter to the duchess, more expressive of chagrin at the wretched state of affairs in England, than of exultation at the success of his arms.

"*June* 27. — I writ to you yesterday by the post, and have nothing new. However, I won't let Colonel Panton go without a letter to you. I send him with the good news of Douay and the fort of Scarpe's being surrendered; the giving up of the latter will save us a good deal of time, and a great many men's lives. But I am so mortified at the extravagant behaviour in England, that I can take no pleasure. It is very plain the king of France is so heartened by the expectations of disorders in England, that he will not sincerely think of peace, so that, at this time, I am full of spleen; for I am afraid I must drudge on for four or five months longer, and venture my life for those who do not deserve it from me."

We close this account with another letter to the duchess, which indicates great humanity.

On the 30th he writes, —

"I was in such a hurry when I sent away Colonel Panton, that I had hardly time to write to you. I am obliged to you for the apprehensions you are in for my health. I must own to you, that my apprehensions of sickness are greater than what I have for the French army. I thank God it is not yet got amongst our soldiers, but all the churches and the villages are full of the poor country people, the greatest part of them being sick, and most of the towns being infected with a spotted fever. Whilst we are repairing the breaches of the town, and getting provision to it, I shall have some ease and quiet for seven days, which time I intend to employ in drinking the Spa waters, in order to cool my blood; for I would willingly get over all difficulties, so as to have the happiness of living some years with you. I am told that our new ministers are very desirous of a peace, but the violence with which they threaten will produce the contrary; for the French will be heartened by it, and, indeed, our friends are apprehensive of what may happen.

"Having wrote thus far, I have this minute received yours of the 13th. Upon the whole, the behaviour of the queen is such, that I beg of you, that you will not, on any account, be prevailed upon to write any more to

her; and, I should think, the prudent behaviour for you should be, not to be in the way of being solicited. Whatever happens, I must be uneasy, since all my friends agree that I must continue in a post in which it must be impossible for me to succeed, as I have formerly done. God bless and preserve you, and give us quietness."

CH. LXXXIX.—LAST INTERVIEW OF THE DUCHESS.—1710.

WHILE the Duke of Marlborough was employed in the siege of Douay, he was mortified by a rapid succession of political events, in the court and cabinet, which portended the most fatal consequences, not only to himself, but to the welfare of England and Europe. These were the final rupture between the queen and the duchess, the appointment of the duke of Shrewsbury to the office of lord chamberlain, the struggle relative to military promotions, and the dismission of Sunderland.

We have already alluded to the promise which the duchess extorted from the queen, for the transfer of her offices to her daughters, and her suspicions that it would not be fulfilled. Influenced by repeated importunities, her husband was reluctantly persuaded to solicit the queen on this delicate subject, and in the last audience before his departure, he made two requests to her majesty: the first, that she would kindly permit the duchess to remain in the country as much as her offices in the household would allow; and the second, that she would accept her resignation in favour of their daughters, at the conclusion of peace, when it was his own intention to retire. To the first request the queen acceded; and to the second, replied, that she could not think of parting with the duchess, but spoke of the reversion in so favourable a manner, as led him to suppose that it met with her approbation.

Soon after his departure, however, the duchess found that he had mistaken the queen's answer; for, on returning her thanks for these kind assurances, her majesty preserved an obstinate silence, and when pressed to declare whether the duke had rightly understood her meaning, peremptorily replied, "I desire that I may never be troubled any more on the subject."

These repeated intrusions no less perplexed than offended the queen, and as she was determined to find a pretext for evading this extorted promise, she was doubly anxious to liberate herself from so importunate a visitor. Unfortunately, the indiscretion of the duchess soon afforded such an opportunity.

While the affairs of the cabinet were involved in mystery, and while rumours of changes in the administration were daily circulated, the friends of the duchess urged her to appear at court, and endeavour to counteract these cabals, by her influence, or at least to show by her presence that her party was not declining in favour. She, however, was too well apprised of the queen's sentiments, to imagine that her appearance would not be unwelcome, and might expose her to new mortifications. She, therefore, persevered in her resolution to remain in the country, until reports of her indiscretion, in speaking disrespectfully of her royal mistress, were industriously circulated. Her indignation being awakened by these imputations, she hastily took the resolution of returning to court, for the sake of vindicating her own character, or at least of proving to the public, that her interest was not absolutely lost.

On the 3d of April she waited on the queen, and solicited a private audience, for the purpose of making some important communications before her majesty quitted London for the summer. The request was, however, received with the most repulsive coldness. She named, in vain, three several hours, in which she knew the queen was accustomed to be alone, and at length was told to present herself at six the ensuing evening, the time which was usually set apart for the royal devotions.

Unwilling, however, to be importuned with so disagreeable a visitor, the queen retracted, and not only ordered the duchess to make her communication in writing, but hinted that she might immediately gratify the inclination she had expressed, of returning into the country. Notwithstanding this ungracious repulse, the duchess renewed her solicitations, and declined imparting the subject of her application by letter. The queen, therefore, was obliged to appoint a new time; but before it arrived, again deferred the interview under the plea of dining at Kensington, and repeated her

desire for a written communication. On this second refusal, the duchess wrote a letter, requesting permission to repair to Kensington, and declaring that the information which she was about to afford, related solely to her own vindication, and would neither give rise to any misunderstanding, nor oblige the queen to make an answer, or admit her oftener than was agreeable.

On the same day, she went to Kensington, without waiting for a reply. The queen had just dined, and no one being in waiting to announce her, she asked the page of the back stairs, if he did not occasionally make a signal at the queen's door, to apprise her when any person was to be introduced. The page replying in the affirmative, she requested him to make the usual sign, and sat down in the window, as she says, "like a Scotch lady with a petition, expecting an answer." After a long interval, which she conjectures was employed in consulting Mrs. Masham, she was admitted.

On her entrance, the queen evinced some embarrassment, and said to her, "I was just going to write to you;" and as the duchess was preparing to speak, interrupted her, by observing, "Whatever you have to say, you may put it in writing." The duchess, however, remonstrated against such cruel treatment, and urged the justice of hearing her reply to the calumnies with which she had been assailed. She added, "There are those about your Majesty, who have charged me with saying things of which I am no more capable than I am of killing my own children; for I seldom mention your Majesty in company, and then always with due respect." During this address, the queen contemptuously turned aside, and replied briefly, "There are many lies told." The duchess requesting to know the particulars with which she was charged, the queen alluded to the expression in her letter, that she did not wish for a reply, and several times interrupted her with the exclamation, "I will give you no answer." Notwithstanding farther solicitations, she still continued to repeat the same words, adding, at last, "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." The duchess proceeding, "I am confident your Majesty would not treat me with such harshness, if you could believe that my only wish is, to do myself justice, and not to ask a favour;" the

queen moved towards the door, impatiently exclaiming, "I will quit the room."

The duchess followed, and burst into a flood of tears. The queen appeared to be affected, and the duchess, after a pause, to recover from her emotion, proceeded to recapitulate the reports spread to her disadvantage, and implored her majesty to state the particulars, without naming the authors. The queen replied as before, "You said you desired no answer, and I shall give you none." The duchess, however, continued her vindication with great warmth and volubility. The queen heard her sullenly for some minutes, and then rejoined, "I shall make no answer to any thing you say." Notwithstanding this repulse, the duchess asked, "Will your Majesty then make me some answer at any other time?" She received only the same reply, and in the agony of indignation, after a second flood of tears, more violent than the former, she said, "You know, madam, how much I despised my interest, in comparison with your service, and you may be assured that I would never deny any thing which I was aware was true, conscious as I am that I have done nothing to displease you." She could, however, only extort the former reply, "You desired no answer, and you shall have none." Perceiving it fruitless to persist, she made her obeisance, and exclaimed with a degree of violence, which she herself does not attempt to justify, "I am confident you will suffer in this world or the next for so much inhumanity." The queen was roused to indignation by this unpremeditated insult, and replying, "That is my business," withdrew to the closet.

After quitting the royal presence, the duchess sat down in a long gallery to wipe away her tears, and compose her agitation. She then returned to the closet, and scratched at the door; and when the queen opened it, said, "As I sat in the gallery, I thought your Majesty would not be easy to see me, when you come to the castle at Windsor, whither I understand you are shortly to remove. Should that be the case, I will refrain from going to the Lodge, that I may not be charged with a want of respect for omitting to pay my duty to your Majesty when so near." To this the queen quickly replied, as if anxious to be freed from her visitor,

'You may, if you please, come to me at the castle: it will give me no uneasiness."*

Thus ended this memorable conversation, and from this moment all personal intercourse was broken off between the queen and her discarded favourite. The duchess, indeed, made an attempt to renew the discussion the following day, by taking an opportunity of forwarding a letter to the queen from the duke, relative to a supposed plot for assassinating her majesty. In this she renewed her justification, and complained of the strange usage she had received on the preceding day; but the attempt did not succeed to her wish, for the queen returned the letter with a line simply acknowledging its reception. The account of this interview was forwarded to the duke, and reached him while he was encamped before Douay; but it was too late to remedy the effects of her indiscretion, and, in his reply, he merely exhorts her to refrain from courting similar mortifications.

"*May 5.* — I have this morning received yours of the 17th of April, o.s., from the Lodge, as also the account of what passed between you and the queen, which is so harsh, that I think you should be persuaded not to expose yourself any more in speaking to her majesty."

From this time, the duchess became as great an object of disgust and aversion, as she had formerly been of favour and affection; and the anxiety of the queen to remove from her household so obnoxious an attendant was one, among many causes, which induced her to accelerate the execution of those meditated changes which had been recommended by her secret advisers.

The same post which conveyed to the duke this unwelcome intelligence brought also the news of the duke of Shrewsbury's appointment. Since the departure of Marlborough, Harley and his partisans had matured their schemes for a gradual change of administration, with equal secrecy and address, and proceeded to the execution of them so cautiously and circumspectly, as not to give at once too much alarm to those whom they intended to overthrow. The first

* This account is drawn from a dialogue which seems to have been written by the duchess soon after the event, endorsed, "Account of the Conversation with the Queen, Good Friday, 1710;" also from her letter to Mr. Hutchinson. There is a detailed account of this interview in the Conduct, pp. 279—287.

act in this premeditated plot was, the appointment of the duke of Shrewsbury to the office of lord chamberlain, without the knowledge, or even the suspicion, of any of the members composing the administration.

In nothing did Harley more display his extreme art, than in attaching to his cause the duke of Shrewsbury; for he well knew that to gain him was to gain a host. Of all the noblemen in England, he was the most remarkable for politeness of demeanour, suavity of manners, and conciliating temper. Of him, King William used to say, he was the only minister that pleased both Whig and Tory; and, from his general popularity, he was designated the "king of hearts." He was regarded as a man of honour and probity; and though of a timid, versatile, and interested temper, was not deemed capable of acting a double part. In political principles, he was considered as attached to the Whigs, having been a prime mover of the Revolution, and appointed secretary of state through their interest.* In the latter part of King William's reign, he quitted England, on the plea of ill-health, and retired to Rome.† He was much esteemed by Marlborough and Godolphin, who had, in vain, pressed him to accept the post of master of the horse, on the accession of Anne; but he declined this overture, from apprehensions of a counter-revolution, and continued at Rome during the first four years of the reign. He maintained a friendly correspondence with Marlborough, and, by his instances, was persuaded to return to England. The two ministers were still desirous to introduce him into one of the high offices of state, but were prevented by the opposition of the Whigs, who either suspected a change in his political sentiments, or objected to the advancement of one who had kept aloof from the dangers attending the change of government. So strong was their intimacy, that in one of his splenetic ebullitions, Marlborough complained to him of the tyranny of the Junta, and of his desire to emancipate himself from their bondage‡;

* Shrewsbury Papers.

† From Rome, he brought over with him, according to the Duchess of Marlborough's account, "a very old woman, his wife, an Italian papist, who had upon their marriage professed herself to be a Protestant."—Ed.

‡ This fact is mentioned in the diary of Lord Cowper, in which he relates a conversation with Mr. Harley, when he was attempting to per-

but a reconciliation soon afterwards taking place, these complaints ceased, and Shrewsbury continued in retirement.

For these and other reasons, he chose to reside in the country, under the real or feigned pretence of a weak constitution, and seldom appeared at court, lest he might create suspicions of being actuated by interested or ambitious views. Still, however, he supported the administration, and intrusted Marlborough with his proxy, in a manner implying the utmost confidence. Writing on this subject, he observes, "Since your grace was pleased to accept the trouble of my proxy, it is in so good hands, I think it much more sure to vote for the public good, than were I present to give it; and if any thing could give me a tolerable opinion of my own judgment in these matters, it would be the reflection, that in any parliaments I have had the honour to sit with you, I can't recollect we ever differed."*

In the political struggle for the dismission of Harley, Shrewsbury continued apparently firm in his attachment, and announced it in an ostensible letter to a friend, for the purpose of being communicated to the Duke of Marlborough, in which, after expressing his warmest hopes that all things would end at court to the satisfaction of the general, he adds, "I own it is hard at first to choose one's friendships well; but when they are once fixed upon a merit like the person's

suade the chancellor to retain the seals, and join the new ministry. We give it in the words of the noble writer: "Mr. Harley gave me the history of the three months past, short and broken, so that it is hard to be remembered; what I do, is, that the duke of Shrewsbury had found means, for four years past, to come privately to the queen; that the Duke of Marlborough, being at the duke of Shrewsbury's house, in Oxfordshire, soon after his coming into England, had complained to the duke of Shrewsbury of his own and the queen's uneasiness at the tyranny of the Junta; desired the duke of Shrewsbury's assistance, which he promised. That the duke of Shrewsbury, Harcourt, St. John, himself, &c. thereon, went into proper measures; Duke of Marlborough never renewed any conversation of business with the duke of Shrewsbury; this taken ill; and of a sudden the Duke of Marlborough and lord treasurer closed with the Junta, and obliged Harley and others to go out." If this relation of Harley be fully credited, the interview alluded to must have taken place towards the close of 1707, or the beginning of 1708, when Marlborough appeared so unwilling to part with Harley, until he had discovered his duplicity.

* Letter to the Duke of Marlborough, in 1706.

you mention, and their worth experienced by a long conversation, it is past my comprehending how that should ever be lessened or shaked, especially by the cunning insinuations of one* who, every step she advances towards it, must discover the basest ingratitude imaginable to a benefactor, who has made her what she is."

About this period, however, we find Shrewsbury in intimate correspondence with Harley and the duke of Buckingham, both of whom pressed him to concur in forming an administration, consisting of the moderate of both parties, or, in other words, to the exclusion of the Junta and their partisans. Shrewsbury made an equivocal reply, but shortly afterwards we find proofs of a secret meeting settled between him and Harley, in Oxfordshire, the intent of which was evidently to mature some political arrangement.†

At this period, if we may believe the Duchess of Marlborough, Shrewsbury was offended because Lord Godolphin would not use his interest with the queen to procure him a pension; and with the Whigs, according to a contemporary historian, because they had recently opposed his appointment to the lieutenancy of Ireland, which was conferred on Lord Wharton.‡ He was likewise offended by the coldness which the Whigs and the Duchess of Marlborough had manifested towards his lady, an Italian countess, originally his mistress, and whom he had privately married at Rome. Harley, acquainted with these causes of disgust, redoubled his efforts to gain a nobleman so beloved by all parties, and so highly esteemed by the queen. At his instigation her majesty condescended to flatter the vanity of his duchess by marked attentions, and offered to exalt him to some honourable station, which he could not obtain from the Whigs. These offers and marks of distinction produced their desired effect.

We find him, accordingly, not concealing his aversion to the Whigs, caballing with Harley, and obtaining frequent audiences from the queen, on subjects not confided to the

* Alluding to Mrs. Masham.

† Letters between the dukes of Buckingham and Shrewsbury, and also from Mr. Harley to the duke of Shrewsbury, in the Shrewsbury papers. The two former letters are printed in Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 629.

‡ Cunningham, vol. ii.

ministry. Some hints of this secret intercourse appear in one of the letters from Godolphin to Marlborough, though, out of respect for the duke of Shrewsbury's character, he does not give credit to the imputation.

St. James's, July 29. 1709.—* * * * At home politicians are busier than ever, especially Mr. Harley, who omits no art or industry to strengthen his party, or to spread all the malicious insinuations imaginable against you and me. If one would believe Lord Rivers, who is very deep in all their measures and designs, I mean the Tories, Mr. Harley and Lord Rivers seem to take it for granted, that the duke of Shrewsbury is very far engaged with them. Whether this be really so, or whether Lord Rivers finds he will not be so much engaged as they desire, this is a little too deep for me to penetrate; but so far is certain, that Lord Rivers and the duke of Shrewsbury join entirely in open dislike of Lord Somers, Lord Sunderland, and Lord Wharton; and 'tis certain, besides, that the duke of Shrewsbury has lately been with the queen, upon pretence of speaking about his relations; but, as Lord Rivers says, encouraged to it by Mr. Harley, to give Mrs. Morley right impressions, as he calls it. I must own this is pretty difficult for me to believe, but I do know also that there was very little occasion for the duke of Shrewsbury to say any thing to the queen about his own relations."

Shrewsbury maintained, however, his mysterious conduct without exciting any further suspicions; and, in the preceding year, we find him in the full confidence of the Duke of Marlborough, and soliciting numerous favours for his friends and adherents. Nor does he appear to have altered his cautious policy until he had fully ascertained, from the testimony of the duchess herself, the decline of her influence, and the ascendency of Mrs. Masham; and did not fully declare himself until Marlborough had departed for the continent.*

* We find this fact mentioned in the narrative of the duchess, on the conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury. Mr. Maynwaring also alludes to it in one of his letters to the duchess, without a date, but evidently written soon after the duke's appointment. The first part is missing. "But the same secret which made the duke of Shrewsbury come to your grace to pump how matters stand between the queen and your grace. Nothing but that he had been led into the secret of her power, and being naturally cautious and selfish, he would know whether there was any likelihood of your grace's returning before he would quite engage the other way. Could Mr. Harley or the duke of Somerset have persuaded the duke of Shrewsbury to leave Lord Godolphin and the Duke of Marlborough for them? Certainly not; but when he was convinced that the jade who had the favour was the entire creature of one of them, then, indeed, he thought it was an interest worth espousing."

He at length took a more decided part, during the memorable trial of Sacheverell, by warmly defending him against the accusations of the Whigs, and exerting his influence to obtain a vote of acquittal. This conduct convinced Marlborough that he was perfectly acquainted with the secret inclinations of the queen, and encouraged by the prospect of the Tory ascendency.

After these transactions, we cannot wonder at the time or mode of his appointment. The queen availed herself of the prorogation of Parliament, which took place on the 5th of April, the absence of Marlborough, and a temporary retirement of Godolphin to Newmarket. On the 13th, she sent for the marquis of Kent, lord chamberlain, ordered him to deliver his staff of office, and to reward his prompt compliance, promised him a dukedom. Without allowing time for intelligence of the proposed change to reach the ministers, she, the same evening, conferred the vacant office on the duke of Shrewsbury, and drily announced his promotion to the treasurer.

"*St. James's, April* 13.—I am sorry to find by your letter you are so very much in the spleen, as to think you cannot for the future contribute any thing towards my quiet, but your wishes; however, I will still hope you will use your endeavours; for by all one sees and hears every day, as things stand at present, I think one can expect nothing but confusion. I am sure, for my part, I shall be ready to join with all my friends in every thing that is reasonable, to allay the heat and ferment that is in this poor nation. Since you went to Newmarket, I have received several assurances from the duke of Shrewsbury, of his readiness to serve me upon all occasions, and his willingness to come into my service, which offer I was very willing to accept of, having a very good opinion of him, and believing he may be of great use in these troublesome times. For these reasons, I have resolved to part with the duke of Kent, who, as I hope, will be easy in this matter, by being made a duke. And I hope that this change will meet with your approbation, which I wish I may have in all my actions. I have not yet declared my intentions of giving the staff and the key to the duke of Shrewsbury, because I would be the first to acquaint you with it."

A minister of the least spirit and foresight would not have tamely submitted to this affront; he would have instantly quitted a situation irksome in itself, in which he could not serve his country with satisfaction or advantage to the public, and which he himself compared to that of a galley-slave. Yet, on this occasion, Godolphin displayed the natural inde-

cision of his character. In an immediate answer to the queen, written on the 15th, from Newmarket, he remonstrated, indeed, with manly firmness and conscious integrity, on the inconsistency of her conduct, in suffering herself to be directed by a private ministry, while she withheld her confidence from her official servants. He dwelt on the ruin and destruction which such a conduct would draw on herself and on the kingdom, and anticipated the dissolution of that parliament which had served her with so much zeal and fidelity. After inveighing on the recent conduct of the duke of Shrewsbury, developing his cabals with Harley, and his co-operation with the Tories, he continued, "What consequence can this possibly have, but to make every man that is now in your cabinet council, except the *duke of Somerset**, to run from it as they would from the plague; and I leave it to your majesty to judge what effect this entire change of your ministers will have among your allies abroad, and how well this war is like to be carried on in their opinions, by those who have all along opposed and obstructed it, and who will like any peace the better, the more it leaves France at liberty to take their time of imposing the Pretender upon this country." He expatiated with the same prophetic spirit, on the consequences of such a change, both abroad and at home, and the heavy responsibility which it would draw

* In the copy of this letter, which is printed in the Conduct, the duchess leaves a blank for this name, which, from a draught of the original and other vouchers, means the duke of Somerset. The name is generally erased in the manuscript letters of the duchess, because in her later days, when she arranged her papers, and wrote occasional narratives, she was reconciled to him, and wished to obliterate all traces of his former defection. This sensitiveness is easily explained, the duke of Somerset having become a suitor to the duchess after the death of Marlborough. The duke was a widower, and had married for his first wife a Percy. He was a very proud man, and maintained a great deal of state. He intimated his commands by signs to his servants, not vouchsafing to speak to them. When he travelled, the roads were cleared of all obstructions and idle bystanders. He gave precedence to no one but to the duke of Norfolk. Notwithstanding these feudal absurdities, the duke had fine qualities. He cherished noble sentiments, had a nice sense of honour, and patronised the fine arts. After the duchess had declined his nuptial offer, he retained so high an opinion of her judgment, that he condescended to request her to recommend some lady whom she might esteem suitable for him to marry. — Ed.]

upon her new advisers. He then complained of the mortifying mode in which the change was made, without the smallest communication either to the Duke of Marlborough or to himself.

It would have been natural to expect that this manly and keen remonstrance would be the prelude to an immediate resignation; but as if reflection had conquered his firmness, he thus terminated his letter:—"However, for my own part, I most humbly beg leave to assure your majesty, I will never give the least obstruction to your measures, or to any ministers you shall please to employ. And I must beg further to make two humble requests to your majesty; the one, that you will allow me to pass the remainder of my life always out of London, where I may find most ease and quiet: the other, that you would keep this letter, and read it again about next Christmas, and then be pleased to make your own judgment, who hath given you the best and most faithful advice." Such a conclusion must have afforded the highest gratification to the queen and her advisers, and have convinced them that they had no opposition to dread in the prosecution of their intended designs: their opinion was confirmed by his subsequent conduct.

Returning on the 16th from Newmarket, the treasurer waited on the queen. Before he attempted to make any representation, she reproached him, by observing, that none of the Whigs had been so uneasy at this change as himself.

"He replied, "If that be true, the reason is, because they will not suffer themselves to be provoked by the folly and madness of others, to draw irrecoverable ruin on those who had not deserved it, as well as on those who had. But I believe that my letter, when it is too late, will be found a true prophecy of what will happen." The queen rejoining, in a confused manner, that she desired no further altercations, he said, "The reports of the town run high on that subject." He made no other observation, and her majesty hastened to conclude this disagreeable interview, by a cold and formal sign of leave.* Godolphin continued in his official situation, and conscientiously, but imprudently, laboured to soothe the irritation of the Whig leaders, and allay the resentment of his friend the general.

* Letter from the treasurer to the duchess, April 17.

In the first impulse of surprise and resentment, Sunderland expressed his indignation against Godolphin, whom he suspected of conniving at the change, and of cloaking his acquiescence under the plea of ignorance. But when he found himself mistaken in this hasty conjecture, he suffered his anger to subside, and approved the advice of the treasurer to weather the storm, for the purpose of preventing the dissolution of parliament. This opinion was adopted by Lord Somers* and the other leaders of the party; and Harley had the satisfaction to find that he had nothing to fear from the collective resistance of the Whigs, who seemed as deficient in spirit as the minister himself.

Although Sunderland and Somers appeared to be convinced that the appointment of the new lord chamberlain was not made with the connivance of Godolphin; yet many among the Whigs and the public in general were not undeceived for a considerable period. The contemporary prints abounded in conjectures, whether the nomination was more agreeable to the Whigs or to the Tories; and though the duchess was persuaded that the duke of Shrewsbury would not be true to the Whigs, yet the letters of her correspondent, Mr. Maynwaring, express doubts to which party he would adhere. Even so late as the 23d of May, we find Count Maffei observing to the Duke of Marlborough, "The new lord chamberlain whom the queen has chosen, has given cause to much speculation, and keeps the public in suspense, whether it is done in concert with the lord treasurer, or without his participation. This point is not yet cleared up, though the majority think he knew nothing of it." He even insinuates that Marlborough himself was not exempt from suspicion, in consequence of his constant friendship with the duke of Shrewsbury, and his known dislike of party violence. It was even surmised that he saw this nomination with secret pleasure; an opinion which, however groundless, injured him in the estimation of his jealous supporters, the Whigs, and which he had considerable difficulty in removing.†

* Extract of a letter from the treasurer to the duchess, April 17. "I have seen Lord Somers and Lord Sunderland to-day; both appear to me to be mortified as much as myself, but thinking it reasonable enough to dissemble. I believe the good news from Lord Marlborough contributes something to that."

† Letter from Count Maffei to the duke, May 23.

When such reports could obtain credit from a foreign minister, it is not surprising that Marlborough should be perplexed with contradictory intelligence; and, perhaps, this painful state of uncertainty was one cause of his implicit submission to the direction of his tried friend and colleague in office. Unfortunately, the treasurer himself was continually vacillating between these contradictory opinions, and unfit to prescribe a decided line of conduct to the absent general.

The only obstacle, therefore, which the queen and her new advisers had to encounter in the spirit of Marlborough was removed; for they found advocates in Godolphin and the Whigs, who succeeded in persuading him to pay due attention to the new lord chamberlain, and not injure their cause by displaying an ill-timed resentment against a nobleman, who might be inclined to act in concert with them.

CHAP. XC. — WILES OF THE TORIES. — 1710.

MARLBOROUGH received the first specific intelligence of this obnoxious appointment from the postscript of a letter written by Lord Somers on the 25th of April, to congratulate him on his success in forcing the lines.

"After I had folded up this letter, my lord chamberlain came in, and told me that this afternoon the queen had let him know he was to go out, and to make way for my Lord Shrewsbury. This being great news to me, I opened my letter to insert it."

It appears singular that this intimation from Lord Somers should have been conveyed in so cold and indifferent a manner, as if the writer himself apprehended no ill consequences from the change. It is still more singular that no previous hint should have reached the duke from Godolphin or the duchess, though in several of his own letters he alludes to the rumours of changes, circulated by the indiscreet conversation of the duke of Argyle, on his return to the army; and in one to Lord Godolphin, dated May 5th, he observes: "Our letters by this post are full of changes that are to be,

and of the duke of Shrewsbury's being declared lord chamberlain."

At length, on the evening of the day on which he had written the preceding letter, he received the formal notification from the treasurer: —

"*St. James's, April* 17.* — Last night I had the satisfaction of yours of the 24th, and do heartily congratulate with you on this prosperous beginning of your campaign, and am very willing to flatter myself with the hopes of its being no more than a prologue to greater successes. We have need of all this to support our affairs at home, and keep up the spirits of the Whigs, who are mightily mortified and dejected at what has been done for the duke of Shrewsbury, as I have reason to be; but you will see my part in this matter best by the copies of two letters which I have desired Lady Marlborough to send you by this post, one from the queen to me, and the other my answer to it.

"I have not seen the duke of Shrewsbury to congratulate him upon his new employment.

"P. S. I have seen the duke of Shrewsbury, but not so as to have any talk. I find most people are of opinion that he will like very well to live easily with us, and I am not unapt to think so too. But I think 'tis very plain that he comes in by Mr. Harley; and the duke of Somerset† gives himself the air of it very much. But he will be one of the first and most mortified by it. You may easily learn by those who keep company with the duke of Argyle what account he has of it from hence."

In a subsequent letter, which reached the general at the same time, Godolphin observed, April 20.: —

"There being no possibility of foreign letters before the post, I shall begin this with giving you an account of a visit which I had the honour

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* There is some confusion in the date of this and the two preceding letters. They do not agree with the comments of the text, but we are unable to reconcile them. How could Godolphin have been dilatory in communicating the fact of Shrewsbury's promotion to the duke, seeing his letter is dated on the 17th, and Shrewsbury was only promoted on the 13th; that is eight days previous to the letter of Lord Somers, from whom his grace is said to have first received "specific intelligence of this obnoxious appointment?"—Ed.

† The opinion held by this nobleman of his own consequence, and that which the party entertained of him, will appear from an extract of the letter from Count Maffei before alluded to. "You know," he observes, "that there is a *juntilla* in imitation of the *Junta*, and that the duke, who is called by the surname of the Sovereign, plays the figure of a chief, although the others, who are of his society, make him depend on their counsels, and only make use of him to inspire the queen with what they think proper."

of this morning from the lord chamberlain. He was extremely full of professions to you, to me, and to Lady Marlborough; and that by whatever door he came in, it was always with an intention and a desire to live well with us three, and not only so, but with all others we would have him live well with, not doubting, he added, that it would have been done much sooner, if you and I had been entirely masters of it; and that, perhaps, it was as well for us that it had happened in this manner, considering the jealous humour of the Whigs.

"I answered with compliments from you and me, and did not doubt but our friends would be all in the same disposition; and I really find them so for the most part, as far as they think the duke of Shrewsbury may be relied on, and they seem to think it the best method to be taken at present.

"His grace protested most solemnly to me that he never had spoken one word to Abigail in his life; then, he said, the only sore place was, the difference betwixt Lady Marlborough and the queen*, and that all the rest might presently be set right; this, he said, was going a great way for the first conversation, but that he desired to use all freedom with me. If you think fit to make any answer to this, I beg it may be in a letter to myself."

From his reply of May 5th, the duke seems to have formed a juster opinion of the motives which induced Shrewsbury to accept the office of lord chamberlain, and of the ill consequences which it was likely to produce. He submitted, however, with a good grace to what he could not prevent, and yielded to the importunities of his friends.

"*May 5.* — I confess to you that I am very much surprised at the courage of the duke of Shrewsbury to come so freely into a storm: I think you and I may see very plainly by neither the queen's nor his ever taking notice of it to us that they have another scheme than what would be approved of by us: however, I can't hinder wishing that the queen may prosper, but I think it is impossible for her to have any quiet or ease

* The queen had obviously made up her mind to get rid of the duchess, cost what it might. The yoke of the "viceroy," as the imperious Sarah was termed, had become too galling to be borne, and Anne was resolved to break her fetters. The new advisers of her majesty were continually exhorting her to *go alone;* this disparaging intimation naturally sank deep into the mind of one not over-confident of her own powers, and of course naturally suspicious of any semblance of dependence on others. But the duchess had made herself generally offensive; even her most faithful friend the treasurer seems to have wavered in his allegiance, and did not insist any more than Somers and other leading Whigs on the queen parting with the new favourite. (*Antè*, p. 19.) Her officious meddling had been a great plague to Godolphin, as well as others, and he complained that she was always tormenting him by her "womanish quarrels." — Ed.

in the hands I think she is running into. If we have a battle, it must be the last; for it will be in all likelihood in a plain, where there is neither tree nor hedge: I hope God will bless me with another opportunity of giving a mark of my zeal for the queen and my country, and then I shall be less concerned at the behaviour I have received of late."

He expresses the same sentiments to the duchess more fully and emphatically, and announces his resolution to abide by the advice of the treasurer, and to act in full concert with the Whigs on this, as well as on all future occasions.

"*May 5.* — * * * It is certain the letter of Lord Godolphin is very just upon the subject of the duke of Shrewsbury; for I am very confident he will prove a true prophet. I do not doubt of the Whigs considering very well what resolutions it may be proper to take in this, I think, dismal conjuncture. You may be assured, and pray assure Lord Somers, Lord Sunderland, and whom they shall think proper, that I am determined to do just as they would have me, not only now, but in all the actions of my life. I do extremely admire at the courage of the duke of Shrewsbury to enter into a certain storm with, I think, the greatest knaves in the nation. His natural temper will lead him to give moderate counsels for a time. But if I know any thing of the temper of the queen, she would not have made this step, but that they are ready to go into all the extravagances imaginable. The chiefest care now should be, that the parliament be preserved; for if that cannot be obtained, which I very much doubt, nothing will be worth the managing. Of all things, the Whigs must be sure to be of one mind, and then all things, sooner or later, must come right."

"I am so extremely uneasy at the letters I have received by this post from England, that I have no heart to answer Lord Sunderland's till the next post. In the mean time, tell him that those are most happy who have least to do with courts; and I am, with much truth, yours."

It is a matter of surprise, that knowing, as he did, the heterogeneous composition of the party, Marlborough could for a moment suppose that the Whigs would act in one body, and in concert with him and the treasurer; nor is it less a matter of regret that he should have yielded, though reluctantly, to the timid advice of his friend, and have been induced to dissemble his resentment at so insulting a proceeding, of which he foresaw the fatal consequences. If we may judge, however, from the integrity and disinterestedness of Godolphin, we cannot attribute his advice either to a thirst of power or an anxiety to retain the emoluments of office, but rather ascribe it to a spirit of true, though misguided patriotism; and we cannot withhold our belief from his own asseverations.

"*May* 16. — Yesterday I received the favour of yours of the 8th, with the enclosed letters from the pensionary and Lord Townshend, both which I have had the honour to read to the queen. At that part of my Lord Townshend's letter which mentioned the foreign ministers writing from hence that the treasury is to be put in commission, she gave a sort of a scornful smile, but did not think fit to say a word to me upon it, and, perhaps, it is not yet in her intentions or thoughts, but what she may be brought to in time, by a perpetual course of ill offices and lies from Mr. Harley and his friends, and no pains taken by any body for me, to break the force of those impressions, I am sure I cannot answer. But this I know, that as long as you are abroad in the field, and that your army cannot be regularly paid but by my particular care and endeavour, no slight provocation shall prevail with me to quit my post, though it is uneasy enough in itself, and would, in my circumstances, be intolerable, but that I know the public would suffer, both at home and abroad, if I should not contain myself till your return, which is therefore my present resolution. But the insolency of Mr. Harley and his creature is inexpressible. The duke of Argyle's brother and Lord Rivers, and that sort of cattle, have as little management here as you say he has abroad.

"At this time I am persuaded the duke of Shrewsbury's inclination goes with us, but 'tis impossible but he must have great measures to keep with the others; besides that, I believe he must needs be sensible there must be great difficulties in continuing well with us, upon the account of Lady Marlborough's present circumstances. However, it is my opinion, that if you were here, he would speak so to you as to satisfy you, and, perhaps, would do so to Lady Marlborough too, if he had an opportunity; but she has not been in town since his coming among us, and seems pretty fully resolved not to come into the way of that conversation. I am pretty sure it shall not be proposed by me, both because I think it would be disliked, and that I think it is not the way to have it succeed; so that matter, as well as most others, must be left to Providence to bring about in its own time."

And again, May 12. : —

"Upon the whole, considering the duke of Somerset's assiduity and inveterate malice, joined with the queen's natural disposition and weakness, you and I must expect as many mortifications, as they can find handles to give us, unless the Whigs were disposed to give such assurances to the duke of Shrewsbury, as should make him think himself secure in acting with them, which treaty, I think, is very difficult to make in your absence, and would not be so in my opinion if you were here. But this matter will have taken its *pli* before that time, and, therefore, I conclude this uneasy subject, with saying, that in general we must take care to keep our temper, and not to suffer ourselves to be provoked, by the injuries done us by others, to make a wrong or unseasonable step ourselves; for that would not only be the greatest gratification to the duke of Somerset, Lord Rivers, the duke of Argyle, &c., but also draw the blame of any ill consequence upon ourselves, which, otherwise would fall, as it ought to do, upon them."

We cannot give any farther extracts from the interesting correspondence on this subject, because the letters of Godolphin are too numerous to introduce, and rather relate to his own conduct and feelings than to those of the general. We must observe, however, that they detail numerous conversations with the duke of Shrewsbury, displaying the wily manner in which that artful courtier duped the veteran statesman, and the grey-haired politicians of the cabinet.

His conversations are characterised by a mysterious kind of jargon, ever varying and equivocal. Sometimes he represented himself as friendly to the Whigs, and as devoted to Godolphin, Marlborough, and the duchess, and pretended that the queen did not design to make any farther changes. At other times, he expressed himself as dissatisfied with the Whigs, and described the queen as decidedly resolved to abide by the promise she had made to the Tories, of introducing some of their party into administration, as a reward for their zeal, when she was threatened with an address for the removal of Mrs. Masham. He declared, at the same time, that it was not her intention to dismiss the whole body of the Whigs, but only to humble them, and to admit into her ministry moderates of all parties and all descriptions. Yet, in the midst of these professions, he did not conceal the dislike of the queen to lord Sunderland, and even hinted that his own friends were pressing for other alterations, and for his dismission in particular. He sounded the treasurer, whether his removal would excite alarm, and at his reply, that it would equally offend the Duke of Marlborough and himself, he affected to lower his tone, and said, "For my own part, I shall never push any thing that may be disagreeable to the Duke of Marlborough; and I will plainly own, that I can live much better with lord Sunderland than with some others, his companions."

When we consider this ambiguous language, and the public conduct of Shrewsbury, who often exerted his powerful influence in opposition to the ministry, we cannot but wonder at the extreme infatuation of Godolphin and the Whig leaders, who could for a moment dream of coalescing with a courtier of so versatile a character, particularly when Godolphin himself acknowledges that it was a fixed resolution taken by the queen, that no present mark of favour

should be given, upon any account, to the Whigs. It is still more surprising that Marlborough, knowing the temper of the queen, and the character of Shrewsbury, should be induced, by the importunities of his friends, to solicit, through his channel, honours and emoluments for them or their adherents. Among other instances, however, we find him requesting Shrewsbury to assist in procuring the garter for Lord Orford; but the application, though seconded by the treasurer, met at first with an equivocal answer, and afterwards with a mortifying refusal.

Things remained in the same ambiguous state, and Shrewsbury continued his specious and plausible professions, with such apparent sincerity, as still to mislead the infatuated ministers, who, wavering between confidence and mistrust, doubt and belief, still courted the new political favourite, and hoped, through his influence, to prevent the dissolution of the parliament, on which depended their continuance in power.

The duchess, however, possessed a greater degree of foresight, and forming a juster estimate of his motives and character, still adhered to her opinion, that he would not be true to the Whigs.*

As indicating her sentiments at the present crisis, we introduce extracts from her letters to Mr. Maynwaring.

"As long as the Whigs fear an ill parliament, nothing can be done but by gaining the duke of Shrewsbury, which, I believe, is impossible though I find Lord Sunderland is pretty well satisfied with him. I wish I may be mistaken in my opinion. But what a melancholy reflection 'tis for the Whigs, that now their fate depends upon gaining a man, that t'other day they would have thrown over the top of the house, if any body had proposed his coming into employment! Sure their bottom is not very strong, or else we apprehend shadows. If the first, I think they have been very much to blame to the lord treasurer and lord Marlborough; if the last, they must yield to the duke of Shrewsbury just come into the service."

And again:—

"* * * I am told that the persecution against lord Sunderland is renewed again, with more violence than ever, which I take to be a stratagem to frighten the men in places to comply with all the duke of Shrewsbury's designs for Mr. Harley; for 'tis certain 'tis they that govern the queen; and if the duke of Shrewsbury, who has sense, will

* Letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, April 21.

come into all this violence, why did he make such offers at first? It would have had a better air to have come fairly and directly in to the Tories; so that I really think all this is craft." *

This is one among many instances which prove the sound sense and sagacity of this extraordinary woman, when she was not inflamed by anger or warped by prejudice; and though she was afterwards induced by the importunities of the Whigs to solicit the interposition of her husband with the duke of Shrewsbury, in favour of Lord Orford; yet she soon resumed her opinion of his insincerity, as we find from an observation of the treasurer, in one of his letters to the general. "Lady Marlborough has been, and is still, so much dissatisfied with the duke of Shrewsbury, that I thought it would rather do hurt to acquaint her with your letter to him, to which this is an answer."

In the midst of the anxiety created by the sudden appointment of Shrewsbury, another mortification awaited the commander-in-chief. After forcing the French lines, he laid before the queen a scheme of promotion for the recompence of those officers who had distinguished themselves in the field; but, either purposely or inadvertently, confined the list of brigadiers to a single name before that of Colonel Hill; and that of colonels, to three names before that of Mr. Masham. This proposal he communicated in a letter to the queen, which was to be submitted to her majesty by Mr. Walpole †, who officiated for Mr. Cardonel, as secretary at war, and he requested the treasurer to second it with his interest.

When Mr. Walpole submitted the lists to the queen, she immediately started an objection to the omission of colonel Hill and Mr. Masham, which she appeared to consider as invidious. She expressed the utmost anxiety for their promotion; but, at his instance, consented to refer the question to the commander himself, though she showed a resolution not to relinquish her purpose. She was so deeply interested in the matter, that before an answer could be returned, she again sent for him; and, after much hesitation and preamble, pressed the demand with more earnestness than

* Letters from the duchess to Mr. Maynwaring, May 20. and June 1.

† Mr. Walpole had been recently appointed treasurer of the navy, by the influence of the Duke of Marlborough.

before; and, to give colour to the promotion of Colonel Hill, she ordered that all the colonels of the whole year 1705 should be nominated brigadiers.

Meanwhile Mr. Walpole had made his report to the duke, and suggested the propriety of consenting to the promotion of Mr. Masham, with the hope that this partial compliance would satisfy the queen. To this suggestion Marlborough acceded. The queen expressed great satisfaction with his compliance, and Colonel Masham desired Mr. Walpole to express his thanks to the duke in warm and grateful terms.

The point, however, of most consequence, was the promotion of Colonel Hill; because, as he had been the subject of the former contest, the queen was more eager to manifest her authority in his behalf. She was also wrought upon by her favourite, who did not fail to exaggerate this omission, as a proof of disrespect to her majesty, and no less as a premeditated affront to herself. The queen, therefore, sent a third time to Mr. Walpole, observing, with unusual earnestness, "I am of opinion that the promotion of general officers should not stop within one of Colonel Hill: it will be considered by all the world, as done in particular prejudice to him." She therefore ordered him to signify her pleasure to the secretary of state, that three more commissions should be made out for Colonels Gore, Hill, and Honeywood. To evince her resolution of making the other promotions depend on this point, she added, "I will sign all these commissions together, that they may be forwarded by this night's post."

Mr. Walpole respectfully represented the great inconvenience which this change might bring upon the service. He stated, that possibly there were twenty German and Dutch colonels older than Colonel Hill, who would not serve under him, and represented the perplexity this must bring upon the Duke of Marlborough, to whom he had written by her command; he therefore begged she would stay for his answer. "Did you write to him, then," said she; "I thought not?" "Not on Tuesday, madam," he rejoined, "but the next Friday, by your express orders; and your Majesty said, particularly, that if he had any reasons against it, you would acquiesce." "O yes, I remember something of it now! But I am very well assured there can be no ill consequences from it, any farther than people have a mind

to make them, and I will have it done. And I tell you plainly, but you shall not mention it to any mortal, that I have stopped signing all the other commissions purely on this account." "I entreat you, madam," he continued, "to think of it till you have heard from the Duke of Marlborough. What a surprise and hardship would it be upon him, to have commissions sent over for brigadiers under him, without his knowledge. He has hitherto been very successful, and does not deserve to be made contemptible." "Well, then," she rejoined, "I will do nothing till I hear; but, positively, I will sign none of the others." *

Marlborough, who had vainly hoped, by his compliance in favour of Mr. Masham, to satisfy the queen, was now involved in the greatest perplexity. On one hand, he received the strongest proofs of the queen's determination to enforce her orders; and on the other, he was assailed by the duchess, with reproaches for his servility in complying with the promotion of Colonel Masham, accompanied with invectives against Walpole, Craggs, and Maynwaring, for having advised that concession.

These representations, which accorded with his own feelings, seem to have made a deep impression on his mind; and, in his reply, he expressed his regret that he had acceded to the promotion of Mr. Masham, but declared his firm resolution to persist in his refusal of gratifying the queen in the instance of Colonel Hill.

He had scarcely announced his resolution, before he was assailed with remonstrances from Godolphin, whose timidity was awakened by the firmness of the queen, and who hoped to prevent a breach in the administration, by timely compliance. He represented to his friend, in the most moving terms, that his refusal would be insulting to the queen, unjust to Colonel Hill, and would involve his administration in great perplexity. "I find," he writes (June 2.), "by Mr. Walpole, that you have not been easy in the matter of Abigail's brother. I am sorry for it, because it puts a difficulty upon your friends here, and nothing would so much gratify your enemies. The question is not so much what is wrong and what

* The substance of this conversation is taken from a letter from Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, MS.; and of Mr. Walpole to the duke. — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. pp. 13–18.

is right, but what gives a handle to the duke of Somerset to tell lies, and make impressions, where nobody has the opportunity of setting it right, or so much as of knowing it till it is too late."

Meanwhile the queen persisted in her resolution, and was with difficulty dissuaded by Mr. Walpole from putting so public an affront on the commander-in-chief as signing the commissions without his consent. He imparted this information to his patron, adding such arguments as were calculated to corroborate the representations of the treasurer.

Marlborough would probably even yet have persisted in his refusal, had he been zealously supported by the Whigs; but, in the interval, he had found that he could place as little reliance on their zeal on this as on the former occasion. He, therefore, reluctantly yielded; but to show that his compliance did not originate from his own conviction, he transmitted his letter to Mr. Walpole, and desired him to show it to the Whigs, that it might receive their sanction before it was presented.

Mr. Walpole obeyed his orders, by communicating this letter to the Whigs, through the agency of Lord Sunderland; and all united in commending his compliance. The letter was accordingly delivered, and the queen not only testified unusual satisfaction, but wrote to assure the general that no mortification was intended to him. When the commission was signed and transmitted, she even affected to leave it to the option of the commander to make it public or not before the end of the campaign. Marlborough, who had yielded too much to make a difficulty on circumstances of minor importance, went beyond her request; and, sending for Colonel Hill, immediately announced his promotion, before the commission itself arrived.*

Some of his friends, who either knew little of human nature, or in their eagerness to close the breach, forgot its inevitable tendency, exhorted the duchess to avail herself of this incident to accomplish a reconciliation with Mrs. Masham, and to attend at court as if unaffected by the influence of the favourite. They contended, that as the Duke of Marlborough

* Correspondence of Marlborough and Godolphin, MS.; Letters between the duke and Mr. Walpole, in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole; and Letters from Maynwaring to the duchess.

had gratified the queen in withdrawing his opposition to the promotion of Colonel Hill, the opportunity for restoring harmony was too favourable to be neglected. But this advice, which would scarcely have been relished even by a person of the most mild and submissive temper, was indignantly rejected by a woman of so imperious a character, who, with all her failings, could not be accused of hypocrisy or servility. The very report inflamed the Whig spirit of her daughter, Lady Sunderland, who testified her indignation in an animated letter.

"I did not thank my dear mamma by the post for your two kind letters, because Mr. Hodges was to go to town. When I heard the report mamma speaks of, of Mr. Masham's having something given him in the army, I did not think it wrong (as the world is made) for papa to humour the queen in it; but for the other, I own I hoped it an impossible thing for you ever to be reconciled to such a creature, even if it could do good, but that is impossible; it would, may be, let her do the mischief underhand. I dare say nothing will be ever right, but the removing her; and if that can't be, I hope she will join with the Tories and not with the Whigs, and then it won't be in their power to ruin all the world when there is a peace."

The duchess needed not, indeed, the instigation of her daughter to repel this humiliating advice; and her conduct, in this instance, was fully sanctioned by her husband, who testified his feeling on this subject in a frank and manly style, which showed affection for his wife, and a proper regard to his own dignity.

"*May* 22. — Your last letter of the 27th of the last month, in my opinion, judges so very right of our disagreeable circumstances, and what our behaviour ought to be, as well as the true judgment you make of the sentiments of great numbers of the Whigs, that I have locked it up carefully, in order to read it often this summer; and pray be assured that my resolution is, not only not to submit to Mrs. Masham, but to nobody; but that I will govern myself according to the judgment and experience I have had of this ungrateful world. This being my resolution, it is a very great satisfaction to me to find you are of the same mind; for after the many troubles and dependences we have laboured through during almost all our whole lifetime, for the good of our children, I think it very reasonable, though we had met with no ungrateful disappointments, that we should, before we die, be masters of some little time for our own ease and quiet. I must flatter myself this campaign will give us that happiness. I agree with you that Mr. Craggs wishes us both very well, and has very good judgment; but I know his temper is such, that he cannot think any body is in earnest that talks of retiring. I have writ to Lord

Godolphin concerning the blue ribbon for Lord Orford in the manner you desired; and I am so desirous to have it done, that if the duke of Shrewsbury continues to make expressions to me, and that you think it may do good, I shall have no difficulty in pressing him to interest himself. When he says to some of the Whigs, that if the queen could be assured that she should not be made uneasy as to Mrs. Masham, she would never in her lifetime think of the Tories, I take this to be the expedient taken for the persuading the Whigs to drop you and me, after which the lord treasurer must receive such mortifications as will make it impossible to be long-lived at court.

"I think it is very plain that all this is very likely to happen, and when it does, I am sure I shall be more easy to see it any where than at court.

"As you now know my heart and soul, I beg you will not show any uneasiness to Mr. Craggs, Mr. Walpole, or Mr. Maynwaring, but hear all they say, which will enable you the better to know what is doing; otherwise, I shall be here in great ignorance. For, let their politics be never so bad, I must not be angry with them, but endeavour, when I return, to make them sensible of what is right."

"*May* 29. — Since my last I am obliged to you for three of yours, as well as for the enclosed letters, by which I see there are great inclinations amongst almost all your friends, that you should, in appearance, live easy with Mrs. Masham. I did, in a former letter, desire you would not take any thing of this so ill as to have disputes and coldness with them; but, as to my opinion, I think you judge entirely right of this whole matter, and you may be sure that I will govern myself accordingly; for, to be emperor of the world, I would not give reason for people to believe any consideration would make me truckle to her. I can, for the good of my country and friends, live so as not to seem to know she is in the world."

CHAP. XCI. — DECLINE OF THE WHIGS. — 1710.

THE greatest mortification which Marlborough experienced was, the disgrace of his son-in-law, the earl of Sunderland, secretary of state.

Harley and his partisans deriving additional confidence from the success of their former schemes, as well as from the timidity of the treasurer and the divisions among the Whigs, felt no hesitation in pursuing their project, and selected for their victim that member of the Junta whom they knew to be most obnoxious to the queen and Mrs. Masham, and whose overbearing temper had frequently disgusted even his col-

leagues in office. In this attack they were warmly seconded by the open assistance of the duke of Somerset, and the secret manœuvres of the new lord chamberlain, and did not, as on the former occasion, deem it necessary to conceal their hostility. Rumours, therefore, of the intended removal began to be circulated soon after the appointment of Shrewsbury, and gained credit in proportion as jealousies multiplied between the two ministers and the Whigs, and divisions among that party increased.

During this ferment of the public mind, and amidst the political feuds which arose while this great object was in agitation, the accounts which Marlborough received from England contributed to wound his feelings; as they all concurred in representing the pertinacity of the queen, the animosity of his enemies, the suspicions of lukewarmness or insincerity among his friends, and above all, the apathy and want of union among the Whigs, to co-operate cordially with the treasurer in counteracting so disgraceful and fatal a measure.

We cannot more faithfully develope the political feuds at this critical period than in the words of the treasurer, in his letters to the Duke and the Duchess of Marlborough.

"*May* 29. — * * * Our affairs here," he observes to the duke, "are a little more quiet at present, because the duke of Somerset is out of town, and, indeed, I know no other reason for it. I am every day more and more confirmed in my opinion, that as the duke of Somerset is the driver of every thing against Lady Marlborough and you, so the duke of Shrewsbury's consideration for you, and the fear of justly *choquing* you, has been the only reason that has hindered the affair of Lord Sunderland from being brought to a conclusion. But, at the same time, the duke of Shrewsbury knows the queen is under engagements to a great many of the Tories that were spoken to about the danger Mrs. Masham was in, as the queen was told; and that matter has been so aggravated since to her, and so many lies told by the duke of Somerset and others, as gives the handle for whatever ill expressions they please; and I believe it is chiefly the duke of Shrewsbury that has kept off the ill effects of them, for the reasons I have told you. At the same time I don't think that he has any thoughts of living at all well with the Whigs, or of trusting them so as to lose his hold with the others, or not to make his court to the queen; but as far as it is possible to him to keep off violent extremities till your arrival, I think he will try to do it. Now, this being the case, I offer it to your reflection, whether it might not be proper for you to write to the duke of Shrewsbury, taking notice of the rumours which are on that side the water concerning Lord Sunderland, and how they do not only affect

you really, but are thought to do so to that degree, that whatever your own inclination might be, it must needs make you absolutely incapable of being of any use afterwards, either where you are, or with the Dutch, who would presently not fail to take care of themselves, by making their own terms, and that you thought it necessary to say this to the duke of Shrewsbury for the queen's sake, knowing very well that whatever I could say of this kind to her majesty, it would be imputed to my partiality. I cannot but think such a letter as this might do good, and I don't see what hurt it could do; but you can judge best how far it is easy or not to yourself.

"Lord Halifax, lord president, Lord Sunderland, and generally the rest of the Whigs, are so uneasy, that they are ready to make their court to Mr. Harley, who appears as ready to receive it, and is making advances and professions almost to every one that he thinks our friends. He has been twice with the duke of Hamilton; he has sent twice to Mr. Boyle, and is exceedingly desirous to be thought moderate; the lord president and Lord Sunderland are always employing Lord Halifax or the duke of Newcastle to him, or to the duke of Shrewsbury. I think they are in the wrong to do so. I stand stock still, and make the same answer to abundance of applications, and even from the very best of the Tories; viz., that while you are absent, I can only thank them, but cannot enter into any engagement without you." * * * *

"*May* 30. — Having read over my letter again this morning, I find it so long and so particular, that I am quite ashamed to write any more upon these disagreeable subjects, and shall, therefore, only add that Mr. Vanbrugh assures me that the gallery at Blenheim shall be covered in before winter."

Lord Godolphin to the Duchess.

"*Thursday, June* 1. *at* 11. — I have received this morning the favour of your letter by the boy, and shall follow your orders in speaking to-morrow to the queen upon that matter, as well as I can; and all I have learnt since my letter to you yesterday from my intelligencer is, that to-morrow will not be too late for any thing I have to say upon that subject." * * * *

He then mentions a conversation which he had with a person of great consequence, whom he designates under the name of *Swallow*, and whom we find to be Earl Poulett.*

"He told me," says the treasurer, "that at several meetings where he had been present when the affair of Lord Sunderland had been pressed, the duke of Shrewsbury had always diverted it, *that was his expression:* the great drivers of it upon Lord Sunderland, I understood to be the duke

* In several letters to the duke, Lord Godolphin calls this person Lord P.; and we find in Bowyer's Reign of Queen Anne, that the seals of the secretaryship of state were at this time offered to Earl Poulett, and were declined. — *Bowyer's Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 472.

of Somerset and Lord Rivers most of all; but I think I can see pretty plainly by him and by the duke of Shrewsbury himself, that he (the duke of Shrewsbury) will insist upon something of that kind, and that the queen is more inclined to have it light upon Lord Sunderland than upon Lord Somers or any other of that set; and, therefore, I must endeavour to-morrow to apply all my time to that particular point. I find, too plainly, by this man, that they have not left off the thoughts of parliament; but they look upon that as a more difficult point. I wish it may prove so, for they seem to think they have the queen in a string." * *

"*Thursday, at one.* — Since I had written the former part of this letter, I have been to wait upon the duke of Newcastle, who tells me that last Monday he had a great deal of talk with the duke of Shrewsbury, Mr. Harley, and Swallow, all together, and it was to tell him the same thing I was told yesterday, that the queen was still earnest in the affair of Lord Sunderland. I found by the duke of Newcastle, that he expressed himself sincerely and heartily against it; but that the arguments he used turned chiefly against him that was named to succeed, and not upon the main point which related to Lord Marlborough, though he says he did mention that also, to that company together. Upon this, I tried to persuade him to go to the queen, and to try all that matter which relates to Lord Marlborough very plainly there, as, I told him, I did intend to do, but that I was sure it would have, as it ought to have, much more weight from him; besides that, I know by experience, that whatever was said of the kind by me, had less force with the queen, who always imputed it to my natural partiality. He said he would go, but, at the same time, I found he would acquaint the lord chamberlain with it first, and if he meets then with any objection, I suppose the duke of Newcastle will make some excuse to me. Swallow told me he was much pressed, and the duke of Newcastle said the same, to succeed Lord Sunderland; but, at the same time, he would never do any thing of that consequence, without my good liking and approbation. I answered him, that if it were at a time, and upon an occasion where it was possible for him to serve with me, that I should be extremely glad of his company; but this thing, in this manner, and at this time, would make it not possible, upon the account of Mr. Freeman, for me to serve; and, therefore, I owed that return to the frankness and sincerity which he had used to me, to let him know, very plainly, it was neither my intention nor my opinion that he should accept; upon which, he said he would go immediately, and send his final answer to the queen, which just now I hear he has done; for the duke of Shrewsbury has been with me this minute to tell me so, adding, that they will help to give some further delay to the queen's intentions, which he still appears to wish may not be uneasy to Lord Marlborough."

We find also from the duchess, that Lord Halifax, who is mentioned as the other agent of the Whigs, made no scruple to declare that his respect for the duke of Shrewsbury was equal to that which he entertained for his other friends, which induced her to remark in a letter to Mr. Maynwaring

of the same date, "I suppose he does not say less to him alone. So I conclude that the duke of Shrewsbury, Lord Halifax, the duke of Newcastle, and Mr. Harley, are pretty near of one mind."

In a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, the treasurer gives a brief account of these conversations in similar terms, and communicates farther hints on the projected change. To these hints and rumours of divisions between his friends, Marlborough replied in warm and indignant expressions to the duchess, testifying more firmness than was shown by his correspondents in England.

"*June* 15. — We have received at the same time the two letters from England of the 26th and 30th. By yours and those letters you send me, I find there are jealousies amongst our friends, which is always a forerunner of distraction. You certainly judge right, that whatever management the lord treasurer may have, he is in our true interests. I agree with you, that there has always been a correspondence between Mr. Harley and the queen, which makes it impossible for me ever to rely upon any thing that the queen may say or promise. In return for all the pains you take in giving me information of what passes, I have no return to make but that of my heart being truly yours.

"If I were to make the choice," says he, "I would much rather be turned out, than Lord Sunderland should be removed; so that I hope all my friends will struggle with all their might and power; for if this point be carried, there is nothing disagreeable and ruinous but must be expected."

Impressed, as he appears to have been, with the fatal consequences of the projected change, he complied with the request of his friends, in writing to the duke of Shrewsbury, deprecating the disgrace of his son-in-law, and the dissolution of parliament.

"*June* 19. — My Lord; The constant friendship there has always been between us encourages me to unburthen myself to you in this juncture, when every post brings fresh alarms of the removal of my Lord Sunderland. 'Tis not his relationship to me, and the kindness I have for him that concerns me, so much as the effect it may have on the queen's service and the public; for as such a step will generally be thought to be aimed at, and must of course reflect upon me, it will, in a great measure, render me incapable of being useful to her majesty's affairs, either at home or abroad. This is what I have solely at heart, and shall ever be unalterable in my duty and zeal for it. I own to you, were it not at this critical juncture, when, with the blessing of God, we have so fair a prospect of putting a happy end to this long and expensive war, which, I think, nothing but our own unfortunate divisions at home can prevent, I

should be much less concerned; for I am persuaded the insolency of the French, under their languishing circumstances, is chiefly owing to the advantage they hope to reap from thence. There is another thing, I find, makes a great noise in Holland, and that is, the report of a new parliament, which, I am confident, would be such a damp to the Dutch, as our enemies would not fail likewise to reap great advantages from. I must, therefore, entreat you to reflect seriously on the present situation of our affairs, both at home and abroad, and that you will give your helping hand, to prevent the mischiefs that are threatening us. I expect particularly, from your friendship to me, that you will be a support to Lord Sunderland, and from your zeal for the queen's service and the public, that you will use your endeavours that the parliament may die its natural death. I have not opened myself thus far to any one person whatever; but as I have no reserve with my lord treasurer, you may communicate with him upon what I write; but as to Lord Sunderland, I chiefly depend upon your grace, because what his lordship could say on that occasion to the queen, might be taken more partial than coming from myself. I am, with great truth," &c.

Marlborough had scarcely written this humble letter, before he was mortified with still farther accounts of the queen's resolution to carry her threat into immediate execution. For at the latter end of May the treasurer received a message from the duke of Shrewsbury, that the queen was very pressing to bring the affair of Lord Sunderland, which had long been the talk of the town, to a speedy conclusion, and that it was only delayed on account of the difficulty in appointing a successor.

The refusal of Lord Poulett to accept the seals gave, as the treasurer observed, a little breathing time, but no more; for on the 2nd of June, venturing to remonstrate with the queen, he obtained an unequivocal proof of her determination to accomplish her purpose. He said, "I cannot but take notice of the noise which your Majesty's intentions make in this particular, and represent the very ill consequences which I think will necessarily follow from doing an act which must unavoidably make the Duke of Marlborough very uneasy, at this time especially, when the fate of all Europe depends upon his being encouraged and heartened. As for my part, I have so much dread of the effect which this will have upon the duke in particular, and upon all the other officers in general, who are abroad, that I do think I should not do my duty without saying this much upon this subject." "The Duke of Marlborough," the queen replied, "is too rea-

sonable to suffer a thing of this kind to do so much prejudice to himself and to the whole world, by taking it to heart; and surely nobody knows better than the duke and yourself the repeated provocations which I have received from Lord Sunderland." The manner of the queen plainly showed that the representations of her minister made no impression; but he ventured importunately to insist against the unseasonable precipitation of this step, and added, that there would not even be time to acquaint the Duke of Marlbourough with it. This observation had some effect, and the queen authorised the treasurer to acquaint him with her intentions, though she had neither appointed the time nor the successor.

In communicating this information to the duke, the treasurer observed: "Upon the whole, if I have any knowledge of the queen, this blow will come in some short time, but, perhaps, will be delayed till you can write any thing which you have a mind to say upon it. I am very incapable of advising you in any thing of this kind. But because I think you will expect I should say something, I think you should have no scruple in letting the queen see, you cannot but look upon this thing, at this time, as a particular hardship and mortification to you, and pressed upon her for that reason by your enemies. But that, after having had the honour to do some successful services to her majesty and your country, you must beg leave to look upon your enemies as her enemies, and, therefore, will not suffer their provocations to hinder you from acting, while you continue in the field, so as may be most for her service and the good of your country."

Farther accounts contributed still more to augment his forebodings, and, on the 17th of June, he wrote to the duke:

"I am to acknowledge the favour of yours of the 12th, with a private letter to myself. In the former there is not much to answer. I did not send it to the queen, but took notice to her that you were more out of humour than ordinary, upon the reports that came over every post from hence. She did not seem very willing to enter upon that subject.

"What you say in your private letter, of our endeavouring to gain time, is certainly right, and every week we can delay the blow here, is a visible advantage to us; and, therefore, I hope your answer to my last, about the affair of Lord Sunderland, will furnish me with some notion or help to break that blow which still threatens, and I will, therefore, according to you commands, endeavour to make use of the duke of

Shrewsbury as far as he will let me make use of him. But he is pretty mysterious, and seems in every conversation as if he wished for help, and wanted help from us, but without ever explaining against whom that help is wanted. Only he said to-day, that he believed that the duke of Somerset stayed away on purpose, in hopes the affair of Lord Sunderland might be ended, before his return, or that he might have room to impute it to other people, and tell as many lies upon it as he thought fit.

"As you seem inclined to follow my advice, in not being provoked to any rashness or precipitation, by any rumours from hence, so I will obey your commands in not being wearied out of my life, as long as flesh and blood can endure it. But if you find yourself under a necessity, for your own sake, of serving abroad, as well as you can to the end of the campaign, notwithstanding the provocation you have every day from hence to the contrary, why might you not write plainly to the queen or the lord chamberlain, that it is not right to presume too far upon a man's good temper? and if he has so much mastery of himself as to resist such provocations, it is still a farther reflection upon those that can be persuaded to give them to him."

The letter enclosed from Lord Somers is worthy of particular attention.* It is querulous and discouraging, and shows the effect produced by the queen's attentions and the artifices of Harley, even on this upright patriot and able statesman. Without adverting specifically to the intended removal of Sunderland, it indirectly announced the abandonment of his cause by the Whigs, and contained a strong recommendation to Marlborough to repress his resentment, and not to suffer this last and most galling indignity to drive him from the service.

"*June* 17. — My Lord; I have been confined to my chamber for near a month; and as in that time I have seen several things pass, and feared many more, likely to pass at home; so I have had full leisure to consider

* Somers was the head of the Whigs; eminent for talents and public services. In common with other leading men of his party, the ascendency of the Marlboroughs had become obnoxious to him. Of course he became no favourite with the duchess. After speaking favourably of Lord Chancellor Cowper, she says of Somers, — "My lord Somers had the reverse of that behaviour, for though he courted me a great while, in order to get the Whigs into employments, visiting me, and if I met him in the streets, or on the road, by chance, he would stand up as if I had been the queen, yet after I had teazed the queen to bring him into a great post, I think it was the lord president, he never made me but one single visit, though I had never one dispute or quarrel with him, nor took any more notice of me after I was out of my employments than if he had never heard of me."— Ed.

alone, the critical circumstances of affairs abroad, which cannot but be much influenced by what is doing in England. Our enemies will not be in good earnest for peace, when they see us so busy in doing their business for them; and our friends can never think it reasonable to depend upon so wild a people. While the expectations of the campaign amuse the world, every body is in suspense; but as soon as that draws towards an end, and the time of preparation for another year comes near, the Dutch will begin to speak after their old manner, of their being exhausted; and what language we shall be able to use for their encouragement, or our own, I fear, is too easy to foresee! Whatever way I turn my eyes, I can discern no hopeful appearance, but from the army which your grace commands, and for no longer time than till that army must go into winter quarters. You have done wonders for us, and I hope you are reserved to complete them; and I am sure you will do all that is possible. It is very natural to say, then, why is the Duke of Marlborough so impertinently interrupted, when he has the care of all Europe upon him? I have, I must confess, but little to say for myself, unless it be the owning, as I have done already, that I can see no reasonable ground of hopes, but from what your grace is able to perform this summer; and, therefore, to beg that you will have that just regard to the glory you are possessed of, as not to let any resentment, or any contrivance, how artful soever, put you out of the way of carrying it on, to all the perfection it is capable of receiving. That will be to gratify your enemies. The most effectual and the most certain way of finally disappointing them and punishing them is, to take no notice of what they do, but to go on to make the utmost use of this opportunity, that so, by God's blessing, you may bring peace with you, and come home crowned with laurels; and then you may despise them, and restore us once more to our senses. These, I hope, are your purposes, and that they may have this issue, is the most sincere desire of him, who is with all sincere respect, my lord," &c.

This letter was sufficient to convince Marlborough that Sunderland would be sacrificed by the Whigs, who did not seem inclined to risk their own places for his preservation. He also received communications from Mr. Walpole, strongly questioning the sincerity of the duke of Shrewsbury, hinting at the lukewarmness of the treasurer, severely reprobating the tameness of the Whigs, in suffering the removal of their colleague, and predicting its fatal and inevitable consequences.

"*June* 2. — The town has been this week in a new ferment about alterations, and, particularly, Lord Sunderland was on Wednesday positively said to be out. Your grace must have better accounts of these things than I can give you; but it is plain to me, from my observation, that Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham have the chief and almost sole influence upon the queen. The duke of Shrewsbury is with them, and when I see it, I shall believe that he differs with Mr. Harley as much as he

pretends, which I believe, is not much neither. In my poor opinion, there never was any thing of half the consequence as removing Lord Sunderland, talked on so long, without some industry to obviate a blow that strikes directly at the Whigs, and can scarce be thought on without regard to your grace, to whom I have such obligations and such a perfect honour for, that, let what will happen, you shall solely depend upon and govern me."

"*Whitehall, June 6.* — I think our affairs here at home in a most unaccountable situation. Lord Sunderland, it is agreed by all, is to be removed, and by none endeavoured to be saved.* I don't know what this means; but I am sure it must end in the dissolution of this parliament, and in the destruction of the Whigs; and I wish to God your grace and Lord Godolphin can be safe in these circumstances. I cannot tell whether you have been acquainted that Lord Somers has written to Lord Townshend, to bring about, if he can, that the pensionary should write to Count Gallas, upon the reports that are abroad of the changes expected here, and to represent the fatal consequences that may attend such a step, and how far the States may be induced thereby to make an ill peace. This surely must make an impression upon the queen, or at least leave such a weight upon those, whose advice is now taken, that certainly the duke of Shrewsbury is much altered, if Mr. Harley can prevail on him, who is, at present, the only visible minister, to take such a step. Your grace is better advised; but I am fully of opinion, that if you can conceive that the lord treasurer is backward upon this occasion, too much cannot be said to quicken him. And pardon an over zeal, that thinks the saving of Lord Sunderland deserves the utmost industry, which can alone preserve the parliament upon which the Whigs entirely depend; and I am afraid your grace has no surer friend. But let what will happen, I am entirely devoted to your service, and will for ever be so."

In a subsequent communication, the treasurer also emphatically exclaimed, "The affair of Lord Sunderland hangs over us still, like a cloud ready to break upon our heads, notwithstanding all that has been yet said, to show the fatal consequences that must necessarily attend it." He also repeats his exhortation, to apply to the duke of Shrewsbury, with hopes that his representations might suspend, if not avert, the blow. These proofs of the fatal want of spirit and union

* Three weeks before these accounts reached the duke, Mr. Craggs had already announced the abandonment of Sunderland by the Whigs. "The Junta have seen their very best friend in danger, without so much as attempting a rescue; and I have taken the liberty to tell them so, and they do not so much as attempt to give reasons to the contrary. But I am afraid their interest is very weak, and then the best understandings go for very little; but an honest attempt is in every body's power, and even that will give great satisfaction to noble minds. — *Letter from Mr. Craggs to the Duchess.*

among the Whigs affected the sensitive mind of the duke to the highest degree, and drew from him a feeling letter to the duchess.

"*June* 15. — For my own part, I am only thinking how I may soonest get out of all business. All my friends write me that I must not retire, and I myself think it would do great mischief, if I should quit before the end of this campaign. But after the contemptible usage I meet with, how is it possible to act as I ought to do? Would not you have, some time ago, thought any body mad that should have believed it would ever have been in the power of Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham to make the Whigs to remain tamely quiet. They are mistaken if they think this is to go no farther than the mortifying of you and me; for their ruin, and a new parliament, is most certainly the scheme. For my own part, I have nothing to advise; for if the Whigs suffer Lord Sunderland to be removed, I think in a very short time every thing will be in confusion."

By the next post Marlborough received the queen's message with the deepest affliction; and, in conformity with the advice of his friend, the treasurer, wrote an ostensible letter, for the purpose of being communicated to her majesty.

"*June* 20.—My Lord; I have received the favour of yours of the 13th. What, by her majesty's commands, you acquaint me concerning Lord Sunderland, has given me so much trouble, that I have had no rest since the receipt of your letter. You can be my best witness with what constant zeal, duty, and tenderness I have, for these many years, served the queen; and though this winter I met with mortifications, I was resolved to bear every thing as far as, with honour, I could, in order to finish this war with the success and glory it has hitherto been carried on. This consideration not only made me bear, but also consent to the desire of the queen, for the making Mr. Masham and Mr. Hill generals, though neither had just pretensions. I am sorry Lord Sunderland is not agreeable to the queen; but his being, at this time, singled out, has no other reason but that of being my son-in-law. When this appears in its true light, I am very confident every man in England will be sensible that my enemies have prevailed to have this done, in order to make it impossible for me, with honour, to continue at the head of this glorious army, that has, through the whole course of this war, been blessed by God with surprising successes. I beg and conjure you to use such powerful instances to the queen that she may be sensible, before it is too late, that the request I now make is much more for hers and the public good than for any consideration of ease to myself. What I desire is, that she would be pleased to defer the removal of Lord Sunderland till the end of this campaign, and then she may have the winter before her, to take measures with the allies for the command of this army, on which, in a very great measure, depends not only the welfare of England, but of all Europe. This is what I beg, in reward of all my faithful services; if it must be otherwise, and that nothing but my immediate retiring will content

those that have at this time the power, I must submit with the satisfaction that every body must be sensible of my readiness to have served, if it might have been allowed with honour. When you have read this letter to the queen, I desire you will keep it for my justification after my death."

Before this letter reached its destination, Harley had taken every precaution to counteract the effect of the expected remonstrance. He had found it no difficult matter to divide the Whigs, who were already at variance among themselves. One object of apprehension, however, still remained, — the dread lest Lord Somers, resuming his former energy, should infuse a spirit into the heterogeneous body of which he was the organ and leader, and by his authority unite the whole administration into one compact and irresistible phalanx. But, his integrity being unquestionable, and his attachment to his party too firm to be directly shaken, the influence of the sovereign was artfully employed to soften and neutralise his opposition. On the 12th of June he was closeted by the queen, who, after announcing her intention to dismiss Lord Sunderland, added, "I am well aware that your lordship will be very much concerned at this resolution, and, therefore, I have thought proper, as a mark of my confidence, to notify it to you myself. I do assure you, however, at the same time, that I am entirely for moderation, and do not intend to make any farther alterations. But this is a resolution which I have long taken, and nothing shall divert me from it." Awed by her manner and determined tone, he faintly represented the fatal consequences which would result from the removal; but more strongly remonstrated against the dissolution of the parliament, which, he conceived, would inevitably follow. The queen appeared to concur in his sentiments; but, after a long conversation, he withdrew, without the smallest hopes, as he himself declared, of saving Lord Sunderland.*

On the following day the treasurer received the duke's ostensible letter, waited upon the queen, and read it to her, anticipating a favourable effect from this pathetic appeal to her feelings. But it seemed to make no other impression than to create an uneasiness, from the consideration that the projected removal would be rendered more difficult, and the

* Letter from Godolphin, Tuesday, June 24.

consequences more fatal. The cold manner in which she listened convinced him that no arguments which he could employ would produce a change in her resolution. He therefore founded his principal reliance on the influence of the duke of Shrewsbury. But here he was equally disappointed; for on reading the letter to him, the duke evinced the same coldness which the queen had manifested, accompanied with a seeming surprise, that, to use his own expression, it should be taken so tenderly by the Duke of Marlborough. The treasurer, on quitting him, discerned no glimpse of probability that any argument would induce the queen to defer her intention.

The hapless minister was subjected to farther mortifications when he communicated the letter to Lord Somers. This peer seemed, indeed, extremely moved and amazed, that it should have no more effect, but added, that nothing would so much gratify the enemies of the Duke of Marlborough as his retiring; and, if he would have the temper to rise above their malice, and end this campaign, with that glory and success which the beginning promised, it would be a sure way to triumph over them at his return. This, he said, was best both for preserving his reputation and interest, but allowed that it was a very hard doctrine to flesh and blood.

The only remaining hope of the treasurer rested on a meeting of the ministers and their partisans, which was to be held on the ensuing day at the house of the duke of Devonshire; but the secret advisers of the queen, dreading the ill effects of any farther delay, prevailed on her majesty to carry her design into immediate execution. On the same evening, she announced her fixed determination to the treasurer.

" *Tuesday, June* 13. — Just before I saw you I had sent for Mr. Secretary Boyle, in order to give him my directions to fetch the seals from Lord Sunderland; and I do not see why the Duke of Marlborough's letter should make me alter my resolution, unless I could agree with him that I had done him hardships, which I am not conscious to myself that I have, and I cannot think but all impartial people will be of the same opinion. It is true, indeed, that the turning a son-in-law out of his office may be a mortification to the Duke of Marlborough; but must the fate of Europe depend on that, and must he be gratified in all his desires, and I not in so reasonable a thing as parting with a man whom I took into my service with all the uneasiness imaginable, whose behaviour to

me has been so * ever since, and who, I must add, is, I believe, obnoxious to all people, except a few. I think the Duke of Marlborough's pressing so earnestly that I should delay my intentions is using me very hardly; and I hope both he and you, when you have considered this matter more calmly and impartially, will not wonder that I do not comply with his desires."

On the receipt of this letter, late in the evening, the treasurer wrote an answer, again strongly deprecating any further mortification to the Duke of Marlborough, and hinting that these vexations would compel him to withdraw from a command, which he could no longer hold with honour to himself, or advantage to his country. He then declared that he himself must follow the example. The queen was alarmed lest the execution of his threat should rouse the Whigs from their lethargy, and disconcert her future projects. She, therefore, addressed herself to the feelings of Godolphin, and appealed to his patriotic passion for the glory of his country, and his concern for the reputation of his friend.

"*Wednesday morning, nine o'clock.* — I received your letter last night, just as I was going to bed, to which I can say no more than what I did on that subject, in my last, continuing of the same opinion, only that I have no thoughts of taking the Duke of Marlborough from the head of the army, nor, I dare say, any body else. If he and you should do so wrong a thing, at any time, as to desert my service, what confusion might happen might lie at your door, and you alone would be answerable, and nobody else. But I hope you will both consider better of it. Yesterday in the afternoon Mr. Secretary Boyle came to me, and I then ordered him to go this morning to Lord Sunderland for the seals, which I think proper to acquaint you with, before you hear it from other hands, and to let you know Lord Dartmouth is the person I intend to give them to, whom I hope you will approve of."†

This artful appeal made a deep impression on the mind of the treasurer; he smothered his indignation, and, reluctantly acquiescing in the proposed change, consented to retain his

* A word omitted, probably, *wrong*.

† Some notice has been previously (Vol. I. pp. 52. 260.) given of Sunderland's character. He was the energetic agent of the Whig party, and a man of elevated principles, but of an imperious and untractable temper. Neither his politics nor conduct were ever wholly acceptable to Marlborough. On his dismissal from office a pension was offered him by way of compensation, which he nobly declined. His celebrated answer, "that if he could not have the honour to serve his country, he would not plunder it," must have startled his less scrupulous contemporaries, and in the ears of many must sound strangely in our days. — Ed.

office. He, at the same time, resumed the opinion, which he had previously adopted, that the resignation of the general would be attended with inevitable destruction, and employed his influence over his colleagues to concur in preventing so fatal a measure. At the meeting held at the house of the duke of Devonshire, all agreed in the same sentiments, and thus Sunderland fell a victim, no less to the weakness and impolicy of his colleagues than to the pusillanimity of Godolphin. The result of their deliberations was a memorial signed by all the principal members of administration*, excepting the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury. It was drawn up in the most impressive terms, exhorting the general to forego his resentment, and to retain the command, for the welfare of England and Europe, concluding that they looked upon his continuance at the head of the army as the most necessary step to prevent the dissolution of the parliament; and that his resignation would be the greatest satisfaction to his enemies.†

Before Marlborough received this memorial, he replied to the communications of the 13th from the treasurer, announcing the dismission of his son-in-law.

"*June* 30. — I have this morning received yours of the 13th, by which I see mine of the 20th was come to you, and that what I so earnestly begged was no ways agreeable. I am not conscious of any fault I have ever committed to the queen, but I fear many towards God; and if that may be allowed for, by mortifications to me in this world, I ought cheerfully to submit. God forbid that any action of mine should turn to the prejudice of the queen, or the public welfare of Europe. I think any usage to Lord Sunderland or myself ought not to be considered, when that is in question, and you may assure the queen my last steps shall be by me endeavoured to be full of duty, as all my former have been; and if it depended upon me, I should return with success, as I have done almost every year during the war, which is at this time much to be wished, since the French seem not to desire peace."

In the extreme agitation of mind, caused by such accumulated mortifications, he gave vent to his feelings, in a tone of unusual despondency.

* Lord Chancellor Cowper; Lord Treasurer Godolphin; Lord President Somers; the duke of Newcastle, lord privy seal; the duke of Devonshire, lord high steward; Lord Orford, first lord of the Admiralty; Lord Halifax, auditor of the Exchequer; and Secretary Boyle.

† This memorial is printed in the Conduct, and in all the contemporary histories.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*June* 29. — We have received at the same time from England the two mails of the 26th and 30th. The French army has repassed the Scarpe, the day before yesterday, so that they have obliged us to change our camp. I believe their chief design is, to destroy all the forage about Arras, to make, as much as in them lies, that siege impracticable. The duke of Berwick is gone post to Paris, and I suppose from thence to Dauphiné, where the campaign ought to be begun; but I do not expect much on that side nor on the Rhine. God knows what we shall be able to do more in this country. As it is like to be my last campaign, I hope he will bless us with some farther success, and that things may be made easier for those that shall succeed me; for, as it now is, my head is perpetually hot. This, joined with the disagreeable things I received from England, makes me every minute wish to be a hermit. When you have read this letter pray burn it; for my desire is, that nobody should know my complaints, but that the world may continue in their error of thinking me a happy man; for I think it better to be envied than pitied, for there is no such thing as good-nature left in this world."

The same religious aspiration after retirement, is manifested in a letter to the duchess, written on the day of thanksgiving for the reduction of Douay.

"*July* 7. — Yesterday being thanksgiving day, I was in devotion, and earnestly hope God will forgive what is past, and strengthen our hearts; so that for the time to come we may bear with patience the ingratitude we have met with, which he no doubt, in due time, will punish; for we, I fear, have so justly merited his anger, but no ways have we deserved this usage from the queen. We must look upon this correction of his as a favour, if it atones for our past actions. As I would not be a favourite, were it in my power, my daily prayers shall be that you and I might be so strengthened by his grace, that the remainder of our lives might be spent in doing good, by which we might at last be acceptable to him. You do not give any account of how you are to pass this summer: I should hope it would be with your children, as much as possible, so that you might not be alone, which might give you so much occasion for the spleen. Whilst the queen is at Windsor, I should think you should avoid being at the lodge; but pray do whatever shall make you most easy."

In the midst of these perturbations, Marlborough had received the memorial of the lords, accompanied by similar exhortations from the treasurer and from his son-in-law, with feelings of the most poignant kind; but, before he replied, he unbosomed his mind to his wife.

"*July* 3. — However uneasy or disagreeable it may be to me to continue in the hurry of business, I have not been so blind with passion but that I foresaw the impossibility of my retiring at this time, without in-

evitable ruin to the whole; so that I will comply with the desire of the lords. But I am in no ways convinced that my continuing will save the parliament: for Mr. Harley and his friends know the whole depends on that, and if the managing of the duke of Shrewsbury can prevent that blow, I should think it worth while. At this distance I may judge wrong, but I must always let you know my opinion. After what has passed, I should think this will not find you in London.

"I have had an information concerning Lord Somers, which I would trust nobody but yourself with, and that can't be till we meet. Be upon your guard as to what you say to him, and let nobody know that I have given you caution.

* * * * * *

"For God's sake let me beg of you to be careful of your behaviour, for you are in a country amongst tigers and wolves. You have my wishes, and shall have my company whenever I can be master of myself.

"Since my last, the French plenipotentiaries being, with a good deal of insolence, returned to Paris, I suppose in England, as well as here, we must not think of peace for some time. My mind is very uneasy, but I dare not vent my grievances, for most certainly my letters are opened; so that you must not expect long letters. But be assured that my heart and soul are yours."

Soon afterwards, he replied to the memorial.

"My Lords; "*Camp, July 5.*

"I am extremely obliged to you for the favour of your letter of the 14th of the last month, and must own to have been very uneasy of late at what was threatened and has now happened to Lord Sunderland, not only for his own merits and the relation he bears to me, from whence it may be *thought* I was aimed at with the same blow, but more particularly for the sake of the public, which ought to be our chief concern. Nothing could *lessen* my grief so much as your friendly *partaking* with me, and as I shall ever be ready to own it in the most sensible manner, so I shall always have a just regard for the advice you give me, of which I can show no greater instance than by continuing my endeavours with the same zeal and duty in the service of the queen and my country, that those who do not wish me well may see nothing can make me *depart* from either, and the others be encouraged to follow my example. This I am the rather induced to, for that you tell me it may tend toward preventing the dissolution of the present parliament, on which I think, truly, our all in a great measure depends; and in hopes, with the blessing of God, we and our friends may be able to weather the storm that threatens us, which, under him, may be entirely owing to your prudent management. I am, with great sincerity, my lords,"* &c.

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* The draught of this circular letter is in the hand-writing of Cardonel, with a few interlineations in the duke's hand, which are here marked in italics. He substitutes *thought* for *inferred*; *lessen* for *alleviate*; *partaking* for *sympathising*; and *depart* for *deviate*.

In his letters to Lord Sunderland and Mr. Walpole, he seemed to have lost his former spirit, and to have already imbibed the temporising policy, so strongly recommended in the memorial, as well as in the letters of the treasurer.

"*Camp, July 5.*—My Lord; I am extremely obliged to you for the favour of yours of the 14th of June, and know you must have heard from other hands the uneasiness I have been under of late on your account, as well as the pains I have taken to prevent what has now happened, not only for your sake, but likewise for the public. I am sorry to see by your letter our new great man should have played so unfriendly a part in this business. However, if you would be advised by me, you and all our friends should endeavour to temporise, not only with him, but even with any others they may have reason to suspect play the same game. For my own part, there is nothing I desire so much as to retire; but you know how positively the contrary is insisted on at this juncture, by those whose advice my own inclinations as well as my obligations to them would lead me to follow; and the continuing of the present parliament, on which, I think, all depends, being the chief motive, I wish a good peace would enable me to do it. Till then, nothing under God, but the prudent management of our friends, can prevent the storm that threatens us."*

We insert two letters to the treasurer and the duchess, and one to the duke of Shrewsbury, which he wrote at the earnest request of his friend. They will mutually explain each other.

To Lord Godolphin.

"I take the liberty of putting several letters under your cover, rather than to let the messenger deliver them; that to the lords you will give yourself, and for Lady Marlborough, from henceforward I shall send it always under your cover, for I hope she will not be prevailed upon to come to town; for, in my opinion, the intercourse of letters between the queen and herself has no other end than making things worse. The enclosed, which I send open, to the duke of Shrewsbury, I leave it to your discretion of giving or not giving, for if he be afraid of living civilly with Lady Marlborough, I can have nothing to do with him; on the other side, I think the consequence of preserving this parliament is of so much consequence to the queen and nation, that I would omit nothing that could be in my power; for I am as sure as I can be of any thing in this world, that if this parliament be broke, the queen's glory and interest is lost both in Holland and the empire, the fatal consequences of which you can best judge; so that let me, as a faithful friend, beg of you that if you can help this fatal step you will do it; if not, that you will give demonstrations of its being done contrary to your advice, so that when

* By the same post he wrote briefly in the same strain to Mr. Walpole.—See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. 4to. p. 31.

men shall return to their wits, the true authors may meet with their reward. If you think it can be of any use, you may let the duke of Shrewsbury know my opinion of a new parliament. This going by a safe hand, I do not make use of the cipher; otherwise, I shall never fail, believing Mr. Harley has it in his power and inclinations to open my letters at the Post-office."

To the Duchess.

"*July 5.*— Colonel Panton returned this morning, and I find by yours that you are returned into the country, which I am glad of, for you must have less disagreeableness than when you are near the court.

"The behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury and his lady to you are true marks of what may be expected by you and me from the queen. However, I think all that is good depends upon the preservation of parliament. I shall for some time, at least till the winter, be desirous that you would be of my opinion, that the Whigs should yet endeavour to take such measures with the duke of Shrewsbury as might hinder him from being desperate, by which parliament might be preserved. But if he will not be assisting in that, then the sooner the scabbard is flung away the better. I write by this messenger to Lord Sunderland to the same effect. Keep your temper, and if parliament continues, we will make some of their hearts ache. I am, heart and soul, yours."

To the Duke of Shrewsbury.

"*July 5.*— My Lord; I have received the honour of your grace's letter of the 16th, and at the same time that of Lord Dartmouth's being in Lord Sunderland's place. My age and circumstances make me not capable of tasting much pleasure, yet the assurances of your esteem and friendship give me great satisfaction. I am of opinion with your grace, that her majesty has not done this step to Lord Sunderland, with intention to mortify me; but the world will consider him as my son. I shall speak very freely on this and every thing else when I shall have the happiness of being with you. I wish the time were nearer, I mean by my being able to return speedily with a peace; but I fear the alarm which has been given has so far encouraged our enemies, that they may less apprehend the continuance of the war, they having been always apt to flatter themselves. As I am convinced the queen does not personally mean any thing unkind to me in this change of Lord Sunderland, so you may assure yourself that my behaviour shall be governed by what I shall judge may be the most useful for hers and the public good. But nothing but time can convince the world of this truth, especially when an acquaintance of yours, I mean the duke of Argyle, to the few discontented officers that go near him, has, for some time, told them that the queen was weary of my services, which would quickly appear by the removal of Lord Sunderland. God knows my heart, that the true reason of the resolution I have taken of staying at the head of the army is the tender concern I have for the queen's interest; for I am, as to my fortune, so at ease, that nothing would be more agreeable to myself than a retired life, for the little time I have to live; and, upon my word, whenever her majesty's services can permit it, you shall

see me live very contented. But this is giving you too much trouble, so that I shall end this letter with the desire of ever remaining yours, &c.

"Colonel Panton has this minute given me your grace's of the 21st. I have now only time to return you my thanks."

After he had despatched this letter, he received the mortifying information that his address to the duke of Shrewsbury produced no more effect than his appeal to the queen, though he was still recommended not to break off his amicable intercourse with his former friend.

From Lord Godolphin.

"*July* 2.—In my last, of last night, by the Holland post, I acknowledged the favour of your letters by this bearer, Colonel Panton. I have read the letter to the queen, and also that of Lord Townshend to me. It is next to impossible but they must make some impression; though I must own as little of that appears as is possible to imagine. I have also obeyed your commands in delivering your letter to the duke of Shrewsbury with my own hand, who, as you thought, showed it to me immediately. As to the first part of it, which related to Lord Sunderland, he said it came too late, and though it had come sooner, it would still have been too late; for that it was not, in his opinion, possible for any body to stop that matter. As to the other point, relating to the change of parliament, he could not but allow some of the arguments I used to him to show the ruin and confusion that must necessarily bring upon all the affairs abroad, and, to say the truth, it would not less affect those at home. However, I think nothing is more certain, upon the whole, than that they are entirely bent and resolved upon that thing, if the circumstances relating to peace, and the influence such a step may be thought to have on that affair, will allow them to venture at it. And though those consequences which they have to apprehend seem pretty plain and reasonable to impartial spectators; yet what determines them most of all is, that they venture more as to themselves, by not changing parliament than they can do any other way. These are my thoughts, whatever the duke of Shrewsbury says to you himself, who promised to send me a letter this day, to return to you by Colonel Panton. I agree perfectly with you, that the duke of Shrewsbury is much the most reasonable of them all, and has now so much credit with Mrs. Morley, that one would think he should look upon it as his interest to support the queen. And I can't help thinking also, that he must like better, and have more inclinations to live well with you and me than with any body else; though at the same time, his behaviour to Lady Marlborough seems very hard to reconcile with these notions of him. But I am not sure how far that may proceed from the certainty he may have of the queen's averseness to, and dread of Lady Marlborough, and, therefore, thinks the least intercourse there is, the best for himself, till you return, and then, that there will be a necessity of putting that matter upon a better, or a yet worse foot, if that be possible, than it is at present.

"Thus much as to the duke of Shrewsbury. As to the duke of

Somerset, though there yet continues a seeming fairness betwixt them two, yet his wings are very much clipped by the duke of Shrewsbury; and he continues still in perfect coldness and distance with the Whigs and you."

Chap. XCII. — Preponderance of the Tories. — 1710.

If any thing could aggravate the insult offered to the Whigs by the removal of Lord Sunderland, it was the appointment of Lord Dartmouth as his successor. Though a nobleman of honour and integrity, his father had died in the Tower, where he was detained for his devotion to the exiled family; and the son, if not imbued with the same principles, was, at least, among the most zealous of the high church party! Strange infatuation! that such a mark of hostility should not have roused the Whigs, dispelled their self-delusions, and instigated them to adopt that spirited resolution, which could now alone maintain the honour of their party, a prompt and dignified resignation, which might have averted their fall, or, at least, have prevented a disgraceful dismission.

The disgrace of Sunderland made as deep a sensation in England as any change since the accession of Anne; because the two parties which divided the public sentiment, had increased in violence and animosity. By the Tories, it was naturally hailed as the signal of victory. They laboured to avail themselves of the increase of royal favour and popular devotion, and of the antipathy which the sovereign and the majority of the nation manifested to the Whigs. They accordingly exerted themselves in promoting addresses from various counties and towns, in which the exploded doctrine of passive obedience was solemnly announced, of supporting the queen and the church of England against all republican, traitorous, factious, and schismatical opponents.

These addresses poured in like a torrent from every quarter, and were feebly opposed by the few, which the Whigs were able to obtain. The exulting party, conscious of the influence which they had recently acquired in the great body of the nation, and the encouragement which they re-

ceived from the avowed sentiments of the queen, met these weak and ill-concerted attempts with greater energy and effect. Not only the principal agents in the political plot, but the Jacobites and high Tories, who had long abstained from attendance at court, now approached the royal presence, and presumed publicly to compliment the queen on her liberation from the thraldom in which she had been held. The duke of Beaufort, in particular, said, "Your Majesty is now queen indeed."

But although the tide of popular favour flowed in this direction; yet the Whigs still found numerous partisans in every quarter of the kingdom, and, notwithstanding the apathy of their leaders, could not tamely behold the approaching loss of their long-enjoyed popularity.

As the moneyed men were chiefly of their party, they instantly caught the alarm; the funds experienced a rapid depression, and public credit was affected. The city of London partook of this feeling, and the following day a deputation from the Bank, headed by the governor, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, waited on the queen, to describe the injurious effect which the dismission of the secretary had produced, and to represent that any future changes could not fail of doing much injury to public credit. The queen replied in a manner calculated to dissipate the alarm, at the same time coupled with an indirect censure on this interference. She said, "I have for some time resolved to remove the earl of Sunderland, for particular reasons of state. I have no present intention to make any farther changes, but should I alter any of my ministers, it shall be no prejudice either to the Bank or to the common cause."

This vague reply produced the effect which was intended. Being considered as a solemn promise, that the lord treasurer was not to be removed, or the parliament dissolved, general confidence was restored; the funds gradually recovered from their temporary depression, and an opinion prevailed, that as no opposition had been manifested by the other members of administration, the appointment of the new secretary was not obnoxious. This opinion had a fatal effect on the interests of the Whigs; because it was an evident proof either of their weakness, their selfishness, or their impolicy.

The transfer of the seals created more sensation abroad

than among the friends of the ministry in England. The queen had, indeed, endeavoured to prevent the alarms which were beginning to spread among the allies, and to dissipate the unfavourable impressions, which the dismission of a Whig, and the appointment of a Tory minister were likely to create. With this view, Secretary Boyle, in communicating this measure to the States, through Lord Townshend, directed him to represent that it was not adopted with a view to diminish the credit of the Duke of Marlborough; that it was also her Majesty's intention not to make any farther changes, but to support the allies, and to carry on the war with the same vigour as before. The lord chamberlain also transmitted the same assurances, through Count Gallas, to the emperor.

The treasurer, availing himself of the apprehensions entertained by the allied powers, laboured, through their interference, to dissuade or deter the queen from future measures of the some fatal tendency. He requested Marlborough to persuade the pensionary and the emperor to represent to the queen the danger of any farther changes in the cabinet, and in particular to deprecate the dissolution of parliament. In reply to this application, Marlborough observes — "I have writ to Lord Townshend and the pensionary, as you desired. The latter is a very cautious man, and, I know, will not much care to trust M. Vryberg; but he is so sensible of our madnesses in England, that I am confident he will do every thing he can that he thinks can do good. He is of opinion that the methods the queen takes are what will make the king of France not think of peace." In consequence of these suggestions, the States presented a remonstrance by their minister, Vryberg, in which, after thanking her Majesty for her assurance, they preferred an appeal no less earnest against any further changes in the ministry, or the dissolution of the parliament, who had carried her glory to so great a height, and so zealously promoted the interest of her kingdoms and the welfare of Europe. This expedient, however, was fruitless, as the treasurer observes, — "I commended Vryberg's behaviour to you in my last; but I have learned since, both from Lord Halifax and Lord Somers, that what he said to the queen has given a handle to the duke of Somerset and the lord chamberlain to persuade

her Majesty that the States have taken too much upon them, to say any thing to her concerning parliament, and Lord Townshend will have some directions by to-morrow's post, to take notice of that to the pensionary in the gentlest manner."

Marlborough, with his usual sagacity, foresaw that the farther interference of foreign powers would serve only to irritate the queen, and produce no solid advantage. In transmitting the resolution of the States to the duchess, he writes (July 10.), "Prince Eugene, on this occasion has been very kind, and tells me that he is sure his court will act as I would have them. But I am of opinion, as in most things, the less one meddles the better."

There was, however, no need of any special application; for the emperor had already anticipated the wishes of the treasurer. On the first intelligence of the intended alteration, Joseph wrote in the most affectionate terms to the duke, deprecating his resignation, and enclosing a letter to the queen. We cannot withhold this striking proof of the emperor's esteem and confidence.

"*Vienna, July* 16. — Illustrious cousin, and most dear prince, — The intelligence of the capture of Douay and fort Scarpe was more agreeable to me, because your highness*, in those letters, was pleased to congratulate me personally: whereas, the principal cause of congratulation re erted to yourself, as this success adds new glory to your fame, and will render your name more illustrious to posterity. But the joy which I received from that messenger, is greatly diminished by the other, who conveyed from England the account of the change in the ministry; and I am more grieved from its commencing with the dismission of Lord Sunderland, as he has in every stage of the war proved himself an able, a skilful, and faithful minister of the queen, and most friendly to the common cause. Although I learn that this blow has, in consequence of his affinity to you, deeply affected your mind, yet I cannot be induced to credit a report, that your highness is meditating to resign your military command, and to retire from court; for what could happen more fatal to the public welfare, or what more pernicious to the allies? or what counsel could your highness adopt more detrimental to yourself, than, in the midst of your triumphs, and almost at the conclusion of the war, to desert the common cause, to throw away the merit of your former services, to excite the anger of the queen, to give scope to the vengeance of your enemies, and even to offend your best friends?

* The original is "dilection," which is the address used by the emperor to princes of the German empire. It is here changed for an equivalent term, more familiar to English ears.

"Can your affectionate heart, even for a moment, indulge the thought of such terrible calamities, both to the public weal and yourself? by which the whole fruits of the war, acquired with such labour and glory, would be exposed to the utmost peril; and the almost desperate cause of the enemy, to the eternal reproach of your name, would resume new strength, not to be overcome by future exertions. I am willing to believe, on the contrary, that you will continue firm to the public weal; and be convinced that whatever aid, favour, or authority I can ever confer shall be given to you and yours, as the prince of Savoy will tell you more at large. I therefore send letters to the queen, imploring her by the common bond of our friendship, not to take any new measures at this season, nor prematurely to dissolve a parliament, which has so well deserved of Europe, and that she would still continue to consult the present ministry, particularly yourself and the lord high treasurer, on whom great part of our public hopes and happiness depend. I hope that her Majesty will yield to my prayers; and, still more, that she will repel the sinister arts of those, who can hope to attain no honours, except by the subversion of the common cause. Moreover, I confirm to your highness the assurances of my benevolent regard." *

In the letter to the queen, the emperor addressed her Majesty in firm but respectful terms, thanking her for the explanation, which she had been pleased to give of her motives in the dismission of Sunderland, and for disclaiming any intention of farther alterations, which he strongly deprecated. His remonstrance on this delicate subject strikingly evinces the anxiety felt by all the allies, lest the perfect union, which had hitherto prevailed among them, should be shaken by any future changes; and he exhorted her, in the most earnest terms, to continue a ministry and parliament, whose counsels had so eminently promoted the success of the common cause. "Your Majesty cannot," he concludes, "find among your subjects any, who, in parliament, could better second your generous intentions; or could serve you, either in your councils or the management of your armies, with more zeal, fidelity, and universal approbation, than those who have the honour to be employed, and in whom you, as well as the allies, could place equal confidence."

The Duke of Marlborough was deeply affected with the kind expressions contained in the imperial epistle, and thus announces his satisfaction to Godolphin: —

"*August* 2. — I have received by this courier a very obliging letter from the emperor. The only satisfaction I have is, that I meet with kind jus-

* Official translation from the Latin original.

tice from those on this side of the water; so that if you can think of any thing, in which the States and the emperor can be of any use, you may depend upon their acting as shall be desired, not only now, but in the winter. I must again tell you, that, as far as my temper will permit me, I shall follow your directions; though if one half of what is writ me be true, I have been used most barbarously."

Joseph gave another proof of his implicit confidence in the duke, as appears from a private letter to the treasurer.

"The emperor having given positive orders to Count Gallas, to observe and follow all such directions, as he shall from time to time receive from you and me, I beg you will, as soon as you receive this, send for him and speak freely to him, by directing him what language he should hold to his brethren, and also to such of England, as you shall think proper for him to speak to. I am sure that he will never make use of your name, but do every thing in his master's. This is absolutely necessary, for reasons which cannot be given in this letter. You must direct him to seem to keep a strict correspondence with Vryberg, by which we shall find if the latter be sincere; for I will answer for the honesty and secrecy of Count Gallas, and I beg you will be open and free with him, for very good use may be made of him; for he will speak to the duke of Shrewsbury, or any body else as you shall direct."

Neither the appeal of the emperor to the queen, nor the co-operation of Gallas produced any effect; and the observation of Marlborough was verified, that in these delicate affairs, the less foreign interference the better. The remark of the treasurer was no less confirmed, that all arguments and remonstrances, however plain and reasonable, and from whatever quarter they came, would have no effect, on account of the prejudices and delusions, with which the mind of the queen was possessed, that all representations of that nature, were artifices of the general and himself, contrived, in concert with the allies, to alarm and frighten her.*

The feelings of Marlborough were more deeply wounded by the removal of his son-in-law, because it gave rise to the renewal of those *unamicable collisions*†, to use the expressions of a political writer, which involved the queen and the duchess in another epistolary litigation. The repetition of these female jars, however painful to record, is necessary to develope the plot of this political drama.

Since the fatal interview at the palace of Kensington, all

* Letter from Lord Godolphin, July 24.

† "The Other Side of the Question," by Ralph.

personal intercourse had ceased between her and the queen, and the duchess retired to her lodge at Windsor, as if to avoid all future altercation. But the violence of her temper would not suffer her to preserve that respectful silence, which was both prudent and dutiful, and was so strongly recommended by her husband.

In transmitting to the queen an official letter from the duke to the treasurer, who was absent at Newmarket, she took the opportunity of writing a long and acrimonious remonstrance.* Adverting to the ill usage she had received at the last audience, she deprecated the removal of Lord Sunderland as a measure equally mortifying to the Duke of Marlborough, and injurious to the interests of the queen and the welfare of the country. After expatiating on the services of her husband, and her own zeal and merits, she reminded her Majesty of her former kindness to both; and to show the change which had taken place, enclosed several letters written by the queen, in the warmth of her affection. After censuring the duke and duchess of Somerset, as the causes of this change, she enclosed a confidential letter which he had formerly addressed to herself, and in which the queen was treated with little ceremony. She ascribed her own disgrace to the frankness with which she had given her opinions in favour of the Whigs, who had placed the queen on the throne, and against that party who were in the interest of the Prince of Wales. These reproaches were expressed in a disrespectful style; but the part of her letter which was most offensive, was that relating to Mrs. Masham. With a characteristic degree of contemptuous irony, which, even to an equal would have been insulting, she attributed to this lady all the mischief which had occurred, or was likely to occur, and contended, that a dread of losing this favourite was the motive which had impelled the queen into the ungrateful and impolitic conduct she had manifested towards her zealous and faithful servants. She affected to treat with indifference the transfer of the royal favour to such a person; and after declaring with a mixture of scorn and independence, that she would never wish for any address against Mrs. Masham, for the sake of regaining her own influence, she held forth an indirect threat, that the conduct

* This letter is barely alluded to in the Conduct.

the queen was pursuing, might produce this very measure, which would not fail to gratify all who loved their country. She concluded by desiring the queen to return the letter of the duke of Somerset, which, for nonsense, ingratitude, and good spelling, she considered as worthy of preservation, as a great curiosity, and as being the production of so eminent a politician.

The queen made no reply to this effusion, till the 12th of June, the very day preceding the removal of Lord Sunderland. She then reproached the duchess, by letter, for breaking the solemn promise made by herself and the duke, that she would never speak of politics, or even again mention the name of Mrs. Masham, and concluded by observing, "But I shall trouble you with a very short answer, looking upon it to be a continuation of the ill usage I have so often met with, which shows me very plainly what I am to expect for the future."

Shocked at the breach of trust, which the duchess had committed, in communicating the confidential letter of the duke of Somerset, and still more mortified to find that the effusions of her former tenderness had been treasured up by so irritable a woman, she added, in a postscript:—"I do not return the letters, knowing they can be of no use to you, but must desire all my strange scrawls may be sent back to me, it being impossible they can now be agreeable to you."

Farther reports of her son-in-law's approaching disgrace, joined to the tone of the queen's letter, drew from the duchess another expostulation in a no less acrimonious style. She testified her surprise at the queen's short, harsh, and undeserved answer. She justified her own breach of promise, in writing on politics and Mrs. Masham, by reminding the queen, that her Majesty herself had not fulfilled her own promise, of reading the narrative, which was presented in the preceding October, and giving a precise answer. She vindicated her present interference, on the plea that it was her duty to make every effort, to prevent the extremities to which her Majesty was driving the Duke of Marlborough, at the very moment when he was hourly venturing his life for the service. She contended also, that it was justice to herself to vindicate her own character from the aspersions with which she had been loaded, particularly of attempting

to procure the removal of Mrs. Masham; but she again held forth an indirect threat of the dreadful account, which the favourite might be required to render, for her advice, to ruin a man who had won six pitched battles and ten sieges.

With regard to the queen's letters, she stated, that the refusal to return them would induce her to take a little better care of the rest. She expressed also surprise that the queen should retain the letter written by the duke of Somerset, and declared, that though it had made no impression on her Majesty, she could make other people ashamed for him, by showing it. To prove that she was not herself singular, in her opinion of this nobleman, she enclosed several letters, in which, we may suppose, his character was not treated with great respect, particularly one from Lord Rochester, who, she said, could not, in this case, be suspected of partiality. She added, "My concern for Lord Marlborough's honour and reputation in the world, and the great trouble he expresses on this occasion, brings me to beg of your Majesty, upon my knees, that you would only defer this thing till there is peace, or an end of the campaign; and, after such an expression, your Majesty can have no doubt of my ever entering into any thing that can displease you."

To this letter the queen did not condescend to reply, and with this altercation terminated all direct correspondence between them.

This mass of mortifying intelligence, the dismission of his son-in-law, and the final breach between the queen and his wife, reached Marlborough at the same instant; and we find him, in his correspondence, expressing his deep resentment at the harsh usage of the queen, and at the same time testifying his concern, that the duchess should have so imprudently exposed herself to new mortifications.

CHAP. XCIII. — PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN. — 1710.

NEITHER the mortifications which Marlborough experienced, nor the prospects of those which he expected, abated his zeal, or relaxed his military operations. On the surrender of

Douay, it was the intention of the confederate generals to besiege Arras, one of the last in the triple chain of fortresses, which covered the north-western frontier of France, and thus at once to open a way to Paris.

After devoting some days to the refreshment of the troops, Marlborough passed the Scarpe at Vitry on the 10th of July, and joining Eugene, the combined forces marched in the direction of Aubigny. Halting on the 11th, at Vimy, until their baggage and bread waggons, which had been retarded by the rains, came up, they reached, on the following day, the camp of Villers-Brulin, extending their right from the sources of the Lave along the Scarpe, while the left was stretched to the woods of Villers aux Bois, near the sources of the Lens.

On reaching this position, they found that Marshal Villars, anticipating their design, had called in his detachments, increased his army from the neighbouring garrisons, and, quitting his camp between Arras and Oisy, had retired behind his new lines on the Crinchon, stretching from Arras towards the Somme. Deeming it impracticable, either to attack him in that strong post, or to invest Arras, while he occupied this position, with an equal force, they turned their attention to Bethune, the capture of which would facilitate the reduction of Aire and St. Venant, and thus establish a continued communication with Lille; while it would open the way to Abbeville, and intercept that of the enemy with Calais. The occupation of Hesdin, on the Canche, which had been long neglected, would leave no strong place between them and the French coast. The skilful dispositions of Villars, however, prevented the execution of the project; and Marlborough acknowledged, with regret, the foresight and abilities of his able antagonist.*

On the 13th, the confederate generals detached from the main army 20 battalions and 18 squadrons, who invested Bethune on the 15th. It was defended by M. Puy Vauban, nephew of the marshal, and contained a garrison of 9000 men. The works were strong, but the necessary supplies for a protracted resistance were not fully provided.

Two regular attacks were made, under generals Schulem-

* Considerations on the operations for the rest of the campaign of 1710, MS.—Memoires de Villars.

burg and Fagel; and the cavalry destined for the siege were commanded by General Wood. The army of observation, under the two chiefs, returned to the camp of Villers-Brulin.

When the allies had sat down before Bethune, Villars moved in eight columns upon Habarque, near Montenencourt. This march seemed to indicate a design of attacking the open position of the allies, who changed their front on the 20th, and placed their left at Mont St. Eloi, and the right at Le Comte, in advance of Houdain. In expectation of a battle, Marlborough and Eugene made their dispositions, called in the detachment under the prince of Hesse, which was posted in the vicinity of Lens, and drew reinforcements from the besieging army. On the 1st of August, Marlborough advanced with a detachment to reconnoitre, and discovered that the enemy, instead of preparing to attack, were actively engaged in constructing new lines across the plain, from the rivulet Ugie towards the Somme, and fortifying their centre at Avesnes le Comte. By means of this cordon of intrenchments, a new series of defences was established; the interior of France was again covered from incursions; and the measures taken upon this spot gave rise to the celebrated manœuvres, which illustrated the next campaign.*

Having no intention to risk the fate of France by an engagement, Villars merely carried on a war of posts upon the flanks of the allies, behind his new position; but these measures could not save Bethune, which surrendered by capitulation, on the 28th of August, and the garrison were conducted to St. Omer on the following day.

While the victorious general, in concurrence with his illustrious colleague, Prince Eugene, was ardently promoting the glory of his country, and the welfare of the grand alli-

* No doubt can be entertained that Villars acted with great ability in this campaign, by avoiding a battle, which, if lost, would have risked the fate of France, as well as by protecting the fortresses on the frontier, such as Arras and Ypres, the reduction of which would have exposed France more than that of the places captured by the allies. Nor did he deserve less of his king and country, by preventing the expedition against the coast of France. We are, therefore, concerned to find some of our historians severely censuring his military operations and representing the French troops as cowardly and panic-struck.

ance, England exhibited a scene of a most melancholy and degrading nature.

A dissolution of political connections, and a separation of political interests, were rapidly approaching. The address of Harley was incalculably successful. Having obtained the full confidence of the queen, and secured the support of the Tories, with the co-operation of the Jacobites, he continued to employ the agency of the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury, in deceiving and dividing the Whigs. Wharton, to use the expression of Mr. Maynwaring, had long been nibbling with Mrs. Masham; Orford was expecting the garter, through the influence of the duke of Shrewsbury; and the duke of Newcastle was on the most friendly terms with the two principal advisers of the queen, and hoped to retain his office of privy seal through their influence.

But of all the members of the Junta, Halifax was the first who threw off the mask, and openly declared his defection. The secret counsellors of the queen induced her to confer on him the office of joint plenipotentiary at the Hague, from which, notwithstanding his repeated solicitations, he had been hitherto excluded, by the influence of Marlborough. The motive to this appointment, and the manner of effecting it, were equally disrespectful to the general. Halifax accepted the place, without the least previous communication either to him or the treasurer, and did not affect to conceal that he owed it solely to the influence of the lord chamberlain.* The motive which was avowed for the nomination was no less

* According to the duchess, "there never was a falser man than Lord Halifax was." But she blackened all the Whigs who abandoned the Marlboroughs. Her sketch of Halifax, however, is not unamusing. "The first thing," says she, "for which he was cried up for was something from whence he was called *Mouse Montagu*. I do not know any other way to describe it; but it was extremely liked, and I think it was written in King James's reign, or the latter end of King Charles's. I do not know by whose means, but he got into the treasury, and Lord Godolphin raised his fortune. He read extremely agreeably, and having a good deal of that business to do, my Lord Godolphin was pleased with him. I believe he had some talents, particularly a great knack at making pretty ballads. But my lords Marlborough and Godolphin used to say the same thing of him as they did of Mr. Walpole — 'that they were both useful, but neither of them had any judgment.' He loved dedications, and every thing of that sort." — (*Correspondence of the Duchess of Marlborough*, ii. 144.) — ED.

provoking. It was urged, by the enemies of Marlborough, that he had exerted his influence over Lord Townshend, to obstruct the conclusion of peace, and that it was necessary to send over another plenipotentiary for the purpose of counteracting this scheme. It is, however, extremely singular to witness Godolphin, with fond credulity, expatiating on the good effects which he expected to result from this appointment; nor is it less singular to observe the other Whig lords acquiescing in the same opinion.

"*July* 3.—This letter going by Mr. Craggs, who is so well acquainted with the present state of our affairs here, will be shorter than I used to be by the ordinary post. I have instructed him to tell you it is my opinion our governors* do believe they have given so just occasion of offence to our present parliament that there can be no safety for them without having another, so constituted as to sanctify and approve what they have done; and the sooner they go about that the more likely they think themselves to succeed in it, and I think so too. But the difficulty, and the only one that lies in their way, is the condition of affairs abroad, and the little certainty they have of peace, for which they are so impatient, that they would fain persuade every body that you have no mind at all to peace, and that Lord Townshend is guided by you upon this foot. I find by the queen this morning, and by Lord Halifax himself yesterday, that the lord chamberlain has prevailed with her majesty to add him immediately to Lord Townshend. This is yet a secret here to every body, and Mr. Craggs will not be able to say the least word of it to you; but as Lord Halifax has told me the story of that affair, I don't dislike it at all, for he has given me his word and honour he will be entirely firm to the parliament; and, if so, he must be the means of bringing the duke of Shrewsbury and the Whigs nearer together, or he must lose himself, more than ever, with the queen and the duke of Shrewsbury. He has desired me to acquaint you with this history, and assure you, when he comes to Holland, he shall be proud to take your commands, in every thing, and never fail to show you all the honour and respect imaginable. He has said so much on these points to me that I am persuaded he will yet, either not go over, or go so as to be useful and serviceable to the parliament and the Whigs, without which, I think, he will absolutely ruin himself."

After this communication from the treasurer, the singular letter written to Marlborough by Lord Halifax, announcing his appointment, deserves a place:—

"*July* 7.—My Lord,—I cannot express how much I am delighted, that your grace has been pleased to oblige me in preferring Captain Burton, it being a mark of your favour to me: if I may be believed, I have been

* Alluding to the duke of Shrewsbury and Harley.

more affected in being obliged to you, in several requests I have made, than fond of the thing I asked. I could not help being much concerned, after all the endeavours I had used, and the success I had had in your service, to find myself gone so much backward in your esteem and friendship. I hope now your grace will renew your former kindness to me; and the queen having been pleased to offer to send me over, to assist at the making of the peace, I shall have a particular occasion of showing my respect and deference for your grace. And as I shall not be willing to accept this commission till I see a better prospect of maintaining our credit at home, so I would by no means enter upon so nice an affair without the hopes of your favour and directions; and, if all the duty and observance I can pay your grace can deserve it from you, I will omit nothing to obtain it."

Marlborough, however, received information of the appointment with equal concern and surprise, and not with the passive credulity of the treasurer. He could not be insensible to the want of confidence which Halifax had manifested, by accepting an appointment in the same clandestine manner as the duke of Shrewsbury, and he deeply felt the unjust reproach which was conveyed in the motive assigned. To the duchess he expresses his surprise at this extraordinary event.

"*July* 24. — Since my last I have had the pleasure of yours by Mr. Craggs, as also one of the 4th, by which I see you were come to London. By the account Mr. Craggs* gives me of England, I think every thing that is bad may be expected. Lord Halifax being employed in the manner he is, it seems to me very extraordinary, for I can't yet comprehend how it should be agreeable either to the Whigs or Tories; or that he himself, at this juncture, should care to be thus employed; but so many extraordinary things happen every day that I wonder at nothing."

To the treasurer he wrote with greater circumspection, testifying particular anxiety that he might be furnished with positive instructions from the cabinet of England, and relieved from all responsibility, in a negotiation over which he had no longer any control.

"I can't but wonder at Lord Halifax being desirous of his new employment; but I shall have the satisfaction and advantage of his seeing the sincere desire I have for a speedy peace, which I am sure is very necessary for the affairs of Europe, as well as those of the queen; so that

* Mr. Craggs had been sent by the treasurer to the Duke of Marlborough, for the purpose of imparting and receiving confidential communications at this critical period.

if you can, in England, give me any instructions, I would act with zeal. I am positively resolved to make no one step but what I shall first be convinced is for the good of the queen and my country. I conjure you to take all opportunities of informing me what you shall judge best for our behaviour."

Again, July 26, he says,

"I have opened my mind so freely to this bearer that I shall say no more in this letter than that I am *white paper*, so that you and my friends may direct."

In this critical conjuncture, nothing was more necessary than a strict union between Marlborough and the Whigs; and yet nothing was more difficult. We have already seen frequent proofs of his misunderstanding with Orford, Wharton, and Halifax. Somers was, indeed, the only leader for whom he entertained a sincere regard and respect; but the operation of political intrigues had recently interrupted their harmony, and we are concerned to find him evincing extraordinary distrust of his former friend. Several causes seem to have given rise to this unfortunate coolness. We learn from contemporary authority that even Somers was disposed to think the power of the Duke of Marlborough immoderate, and the emoluments and honours of his family and connections too great.* This opinion, doubtless, disposed him to listen with greater respect to the overtures of the queen. To strengthen the impression, which had evidently been made on his mind, her majesty was induced to honour him with particular attention; she affected to consult him in long and repeated audiences, on occasions of great delicacy and importance, and held out hopes of confiding to him the administration of affairs.† But we have too good an opinion of this upright patriot to imagine that he was involved in any insidious machination, though, in delicacy to the personal feelings of the sovereign, he did not manfully interpose to prevent the disgrace of Sunderland. Perhaps, also, the

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 305.

† To this political stratagem Harley and Bolingbroke afterwards frequently alluded, and made it a subject of exultation with their friends in their convivial meetings. It is likewise adverted to in the remarks of the duchess, endorsed on a letter from Lord Somers to the duke, as well as in parts of her numerous narratives, and is mentioned by Swift, in his pamphlet on the change of ministry.

suspicions of the duke had been awakened by some unguarded expression, which the indiscretion of his wife called forth; and this conjecture is rendered probable, because the duchess, in many of her contemporary and subsequent narratives, dwells with peculiar vehemence on the neglect with which she was treated by this nobleman, both at this and subsequent periods. We also find proofs in the letters of Mr. Maynwaring of a similar impression on his part. From these combined motives we are concerned to find the general becoming suspicious of Somers, speaking of his conduct with great severity, and advising the duchess to be cautious in her communications with him, as he had found from several quarters that he was not to be trusted. This fatal misunderstanding weakened the bond which united Marlborough with the Whigs, and consequently prevented, till it was too late, their sincere co-operation.

The only remaining tie which connected this heterogeneous body was the earl of Sunderland, the violence of whose temper had rendered him obnoxious, not only to the queen, but to the duke and his colleagues in office, and occasionally, even to his mother-in-law. He likewise must have felt much displeasure at being abandoned by the Whigs; and, therefore, his interposition, or his endeavours to restore their union, if employed at this period, were ineffectual.

In this state of conflicting interests and mutual jealousies on one side, and successful cabals on the other, the influence of the treasurer rapidly declined, and he retained the mere name, without the power of a minister. Neglect followed neglect; insult was heaped on insult; many of his applications to the queen were contemptuously rejected, and his devoted adherents dismissed from their offices, not only without an apology, but without a previous communication.

A mortifying instance of this kind was the sudden removal of Lord Coningsby from the post of vice-treasurer of Ireland, for no other reason than his devoted attachment to the two ministers; and the affront was aggravated by the appointment of the earl of Anglesea to the vacant office, whose principal merit consisted in his adherence to the adverse party. Another mortification arose from the refusal of the queen to confer an English peerage on Lord Dorchester. Though the treasurer did not scruple to lament to the Duke

and Duchess of Marlborough his want of power, yet he was unwilling publicly to announce it to the parties interested. In one of his letters to the duchess, he says, "I had the same thought with you about Lord Dorchester, and therefore took the occasion of the duke of Kent to speak of it to the queen, believing, besides, that it would be agreeable to you; but she would not hear of it, and I am therefore doing what I can to hinder any thing else of that nature, or, otherwise, one must be forced to tell him, one has been refused. The old vice* has been intriguing about his brother, upon the same occasion, and for the duke of Hamilton. I find, notwithstanding all that has passed, that the Whigs take his part, and would be glad he were pleased in this thing; but I don't see any disposition in Mrs. Morley towards it."

The queen even rejected his application to nominate Lord Raby one of the commissioners of the board of trade, although it was the usual custom for the lord treasurer to appoint to these offices, as being in his own department. "Lord Raby," he observes, alluding to this refusal, "is not very easily satisfied, and if he were, it is not in my power to do him much service. I took occasion to mention his name for the present vacancy in the board of trade, but it would not do. I suppose that is designed for some particular favourite that is to be provided for." On this subject Marlborough justly expresses his surprise. August 2:—"Having this safe opportunity, by the courier that carries a letter from the emperor to the queen, I must open my heart to you. Is it possible that you can be so sunk in the queen's opinion, that she will make any commissioners of trade, or any other that belongs to your office, without first consulting you; especially at a time in which she seems to have most need of your service, both as to the credit and the keeping her reputation amongst the allies, which I fear is very much lessened."

A still greater insult was offered to both the ministers, when the queen permitted Lord Galway to return from Portugal, and transferred his command to Lord Portmore without any previous communication.

We shall close this enumeration of insults, with one peculiarly affronting both to the general and the treasurer.

* Mr. Bertie, brother of Lord Lindsey, and vice-chamberlain of the household.

Mr. Cresset was appointed on a secret mission to Hanover, the object of which was even concealed from the minister. He died, on the point of his departure; and a few hours before his death, he saw his papers and instructions sealed up, and ordered them to be delivered to Mr. Harley. The treasurer observed that Mr. Harley betrayed great marks of confusion, and was not relieved from his embarrassment, until the papers were in his possession. Both he and the general conjectured that the object of this mission was hostile to their respective interests.

The reply of Marlborough to his information on this subject, contains some curious observations, in a style highly honourable to his loyalty and magnanimity.

"*Aug.* 16. * * * * * I am informed that Mr. Harley, in his conversations, keeps no sort of decency for you or me, by which it is plain, that the queen has no design of reconciling you and Mr. Harley, as was mentioned to me in a former letter. I know by the commission Mr. Cresset was charged with, what you and I are to expect. When I see you, you shall have the particulars, how I came to be informed of this business. When I tell you the whole, I should think you would be of my opinion, that it is impossible they should trust the queen with their whole design, for it is directly tying her hand and foot. I beg you will never mention this to any body; for though I think I shall have the glory of saving the queen, she must know nothing of it; for she certainly would tell so much of it to Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley, that they would for the future order it so that I should not come to know, which, otherwise, I shall know, all that passes. I am very sensible of the hard usage I have met with; but my own honour, and my love for my country, must not suffer me to take any thing ill of the queen, but attribute my cruel usage to the influence of my enemies. Our extravagant behaviour in England has so encouraged the French, that they take measures as if the war were but just beginning; so that our new ministers will be extremely deceived, for the greater desire they shall express for peace, the less they will have it in their power to obtain it. For our enemies live by no other hopes, but that the allies will not have the same confidence which has hitherto been, but quarrel amongst themselves, which I pray God may not happen, and then every thing must go well, I mean abroad. I am ever yours."

We find in the correspondence, at this period, many allusions to this mysterious affair; and, however singular it may appear, it is surmised by the two friends, that the queen had been instigated to offer the command of the army in Flanders to the elector of Hanover, with a view to liberate herself from the control of the Duke of Marlborough. It was

even supposed that Earl Rivers, who was soon afterwards deputed to Hanover, was at first charged with the same commission; but his instructions on this subject were countermanded, whether from the aversion of the queen, to confer the command on her appointed successor, whom she detested, or, as Marlborough supposes, from the refusal of the elector himself to accept it. We find also a very confidential and frequent correspondence now passing between the elector and Marlborough, in which the former expresses his determination not to accept the command, testifies full reliance on the good faith of the duke, manifests his abhorrence of the insult offered to him, in the dismission of his son-in-law, and deprecates all future changes in the ministry, and the dissolution of parliament. He likewise ordered Bothmar, whom he soon after despatched as his agent to England, to wait on the general in his passage, and act implicitly according to his directions.

The contemptuous manner in which Godolphin was treated, was rendered still more galling by a temporary change in the queen's behaviour, to which Marlborough briefly alludes in one of the preceding letters. She artfully affected towards him a degree of ease and cordiality, which seemed to indicate the return of former confidence. She conversed with him on what she called a moderating system, and appealed successfully to his darling principle, of admitting to the government the most temperate and able, without distinction of party. She even threw out hints of the advantage to be derived from a reconciliation with his former friend and coadjutor, Mr. Harley, though in so vague and cautious a manner, that he could neither reject nor accept the proposal. Nor was this cajolery confined to her own personal demeanour; for the agency of Halifax was employed to increase the delusion. "Yesterday," Godolphin observes to the duke, July 12, "the lord chamberlain told Lord Halifax, that the queen was resolved to make me and Mr. Harley to agree; to-day the lord chamberlain has sent him word that the resolution is delayed, if not retracted. By next post you may possibly have a little more certainty how this is like to end." By this adroit appeal, she certainly wrought on the Tory partialities of Godolphin, and at least cooled his

zeal for the interest of the Whigs; while she proportionately excited their suspicions against him and the general.

In the midst of this uncertainty, the fate of all parties depended on that of the parliament; and, therefore, the ministry were as anxious to ascertain, as the queen and her advisers were to conceal, their real intention. At this period the letters of Godolphin detail numerous conversations with Shrewsbury, in which we find as much address and diligence exerted, on one side, to discover the important secret, as on the other to conceal it. On these occasions, Shrewsbury displayed so much apparent hesitation and timidity, and such a wish to gratify the Whigs, that the suspicions of Godolphin were lulled; he seems to have confidently relied on his intervention, and to have persuaded himself that neither the queen nor her new advisers would venture to adopt so rash a proceeding, as the dissolution of parliament.

On one point alone, however, Shrewsbury was uniformly consistent and explicit; namely, the queen's unalterable determination to consent to no reconciliation with the duchess, or permit her to resume her attendance at court. This resolution, though the most galling to the feelings of Marlborough, was yet the point least calculated to excite opposition, or create alarm among the members of the administration. It gave to the pertinacity of the queen the appearance of a mere female pique; and even the Whigs, however indebted to the duchess for her exertions in their favour, had too frequently been thwarted by her imperious and meddling temper, to make her quarrel their own. Godolphin also, perceiving the inflexible spirit of the queen, and conscious that the duchess had given numerous causes of offence, was not averse to acquiesce in this determination, and had no difficulty in persuading Marlborough, who likewise frequently regretted the vehement temper of his wife, not to insist on an accommodation, which in itself was impracticable, and to temporise till some expedient could be devised on his return. They both, therefore, laboured to reconcile the duchess to her loss of favour, and persuade her not to increase the irritation of her royal mistress, by any farther letters or remonstrances, which only served to widen the breach.

All, therefore, who were anxious to please the queen, treated the Duchess of Marlborough with coldness, indiffer-

ence, and disrespect. Foremost among these were the duke and duchess of Shrewsbury, of whose insulting behaviour Marlborough frequently complains, and even declares his resolution to renounce their intimacy, if they persisted in their contemptuous treatment of his wife. He likewise breaks out into bitter invectives against the new lord chamberlain, as the principal cause of all the mischief, which was likely to overwhelm the interests of the grand confederacy. Yet notwithstanding repeated accounts of their insulting demeanour, as well as evident proofs of duplicity, he was repeatedly induced by the importunities of Godolphin and the Whigs, to solicit his interference.

We find the fluctuation of his mind strongly depicted in his numerous letters to the duchess, of which we present a few extracts.

"If the duke of Shrewsbury, on this occasion of your letter to the queen, can do no good, I think it not much matter whether it proceeds from want of inclination or power. I do hope, before this, Lord Godolphin may have shown you a copy of my letter to him, on the subject of Lord Sunderland and the parliament."

"*July* 17. — Since my last, I have had the happiness of receiving two posts, as also yours of the 29th and 30th, by Ostend. It is impossible to be more sensible than I am of the outrages I meet with; but since every body thinks I must have patience, I must suffer for three or four months. I beg you to believe that I think I know the duke of Shrewsbury so well, that it shall not be in his power to impose upon me. I wish, for the good of my country, that he thought it worth while; for if I could by it preserve the parliament, I should be pleased for some time to be fooled. Mr. Craggs writes me word that Lord Godolphin has told him, he may in a few days be making a visit to me. The greatest pleasure I can have in his coming will be, my knowing whatever you have a mind to send me. By one of the letters of Mr. Maynwaring, which you have sent me, I see he expects you soon in town, which I am sorry for. I was in hopes you had taken your resolution of staying in the country till my return, and of never being prevailed upon again to write to the queen, which I beg you will continue firm to; for as things are now, you must expect neither reason nor justice, but, on the contrary, all the brutality imaginable.

"I am forced to give over writing, fearing my temper might lead me to say what, in prudence, is better to let alone, in so base an age. I am, and ever will be, heart and soul, yours."

"*July* 31. — By yours of the 11th, as well as my other letters, I am prepared to receive the most disagreeable things that are possible. I shall consult my honour and my best friends, as to my behaviour, so as that I may have nothing to reproach myself; and for your behaviour, I

beg you will make no one step, but as my opinion shall go with you; for it is not enough in an ungrateful age, to have reason on our side, but as things are, we must be sure to act with prudence and temper; so that again I beg of you to trust nobody but me, who love you, and will be tenderly kind to you as long as I have life. Your honour and reputation are mine, so that you are safe with me: therefore be not provoked to say or do any thing that may give our enemy an advantage. It is most certain the queen has been prevailed with to use you and me barbarously, but nothing should be said disrespectfully; for she would not act so, if she were not influenced by others, who follow their own interest more than hers."

"*August* 2.—I have received yours of the 17th, by Ostend, with the inclosed of Mr. Maynwaring of the same morning. By it I see the airs and deciding power of the duke of Shrewsbury. I think he will be the occasion of so much misfortune to all the allies, that for all that this world could give me, I would not undergo the curses he must have. You will have known by my last letters, that I am very desirous, whatever happens, you should keep yourself in the country, and quiet, as much as is possible, till my return. For whatever you say or do, will, in this unjust time, be turned to your disadvantage.

"I am very glad the lords* you mention have spoken their minds freely and honestly at court. If they had done it sooner†, and will continue to speak truth boldly, the violency and nonsense of the duke of Somerset, and sophistry of the duke of Shrewsbury, could not prevail; but if it should, they will have satisfied their honour and conscience, and good men will think well of them. The king of France is so heartened by our late proceedings in England, that all the letters from Paris mention the great applications for carrying on the war. I have received a very obliging letter from the emperor. This goes by the courier that carries a letter to the queen from him, but you must not take notice of receiving any letters by him. Poor Cardonel is very ill at Lille; if he should die, I should have a very great loss." ‡

"*Aug.* 11. * * * * What has been said by the duke of Shrewsbury, that he knows the way home, he may by it cheat himself; for a ruined people may be angry. Whatever happens, I shall continue my endeavours against France, so that my mind on that side shall have nothing to reproach me; and for my avowed enemies, I do, in a great degree, contemn them, and am resolved in my old age, to suffer for the good of my country."

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* He doubtless alludes to the remonstrances of some of the Whig lords, against the dissolution of parliament.

† Some words apparently omitted in the original.

‡ In another letter the duke rejoices at the recovery of his secretary, in a manner highly honourable to his feelings and character: "For not only his having all my business in his hands, which must have been very inconvenient to have changed, but he is also a very moral, honest man, in an age when one meets with so many villains, which makes him the more valuable."

We shall add another extract, from a letter to Godolphin, which will show the humiliation he justly felt, at the cold and unwelcome reception of his applications to the new lord chamberlain.

"If after the two letters I have written to the duke of Shrewsbury I must be mortified, I am resolved to give no farther trouble, but conclude him to be as mad as the rest. I must own to you my weakness, that I can so little bear mortifications, that it is all I can do to keep myself from being sick. Pray let me know sincerely what the duke of Shrewsbury says, when he reads my letter, for I desire you will give it, and not send it him; for I can't yet persuade myself, that he can be so mad as the rest of the world."

However disposed to temporise, and to ward off the attacks of his political enemies, by patience and forbearance, even the treasurer could no longer mistake these accumulated indications of disfavour. The loss of that confidence, which he had so long possessed with the sovereign, the mysterious secrecy maintained with regard to the fate of the parliament, and the open hostility manifested towards the duchess, convinced him, however reluctant, that the dreaded crisis was rapidly approaching; and, from his correspondence, he appears to have sunk under the apprehension of evils, which he was unable to avert. He acknowledges that the disorder of public affairs increased every day; that credit continued to sink; and that, without a speedy remedy, the government would be reduced to the greatest extremities. He owns likewise, that foreign affairs are in no better posture. "Every thing," he says, "that is done or proposed by Lord Townshend is disliked, right or wrong; so it is no wonder if the king of France takes heart, and if England be discouraged to a very great degree. This sort of conduct in the foreign affairs, being so directly contrary to all the measures hitherto taken, contributes no less to the sinking our credit, than the long-continued assurances of a speedy dissolution; so that, upon the whole, it will be no great surprise to you to hear, in some very short time, that I am no longer in a capacity of doing you any farther service; but as long as I can be of the least use to you, I am willing to bear the greatest uneasiness of all kinds."

Undeceived in the hopes which he had at first placed in Shrewsbury's mediation, the treasurer was at length con-

vinced that a resolution was taken to dissolve the parliament; and he was strengthened in his conviction, by the opinion of the general. He acted, therefore, with more dignified firmness than he had usually shown, remonstrated with the queen against a measure which would be the ruin and destruction of England, and announced his resolution to retire, before such a design was publicly declared. He flattered himself, that the Whigs would imitate his example, and that if such a resolution could not save the parliament, it would, at least, operate on the public mind, and produce a favourable result. This hope he expresses to his correspondent.

"*July* 24. * * * * I shall only say, upon the whole, that by my best observations and intelligence, the madness continues as fierce as ever against the parliament; and most people that I talk with think that extremity is now very near. Whenever it does come, I am of opinion it must necessarily oblige me, lord president, lord chancellor, &c. to show our dislike of it in the most public manner; but I think, at the same time, your station is so different from ours, that our behaviour upon that occasion ought not to have any influence upon you, and that nothing will justify your not acting as you have done, but some personal affront to Lady Marlborough which would be an indignity too particular for you to bear. And if you should have a thought of following the example which I and my other friends are at present most inclined to, in case of extremity against the parliament, that step alone would presently be taken, as a handle for resentment against Lady Marlborough."

"*July* 31. — You may depend that the queen, being by Mrs. Masham entirely in the hands of Mr. Harley and the dukes of Somerset and Shrewsbury, has not the least regard for me, any farther than I am necessary in order to bring their ends to bear. This situation is not like to continue longer than till the extremity comes against the parliament, which seems still to me to be thoroughly intended, notwithstanding all the difficulties in it at home, and all the consequences of it abroad, which have been shown and represented as fully as is possible. But the queen seems to be deaf to all reasonings of that nature, and is persuaded to look upon it only as a personal contest for power and favour, and whether the Whigs or Tories shall have the greatest sway; and though it may make a little shock at present, yet all that will be set right, and recovered again by the new parliament, which will be entirely at the queen's disposal, and have nothing so much at heart, as to deliver her from the tyranny of the Whigs and their supporters. This is the language and the scheme. When it comes to be executed, the lord chancellor, lord president, the duke of Devonshire, and myself, seem resolved to retire, as what may most effectually contribute to a good parliament.

"Now, as to you, I think your conduct must be quite the contrary. You must still represent the mischief of this measure, and the ill conse-

quences of it with the allies, and most particularly with the States and the emperor, &c.; but, at the same time, continue to give assurances of your best and most faithful services.

"Now, in case a good parliament ensue, of which I have pretty good hopes, this will leave it open for you, at winter, to give what turn you please to almost every thing; especially if upon this view you are able, as you seem to think, to keep the States and the emperor from desponding, and to preserve them in right measures till they see what the disposition and intention of the succeeding parliament will be, and whether it will not be more inclined to be influenced by you, than by all the rest of the world together, which, since war is to continue, I am verily persuaded is most likely to happen. This is my firm opinion, though I am not naturally more sanguine than other people. But the new scheme on this point is, as I conjecture, to prepare the elector of Hanover for an offer from the queen of your post in another year; and this they reckon will have two advantages; one, to deliver them from your great power, of which they give the queen all possible apprehension, in the least disputable manner; the other, to take from themselves the imputation, which is not unnatural, of their being inclined to the king of France's pupil (the Pretender). Now, if this scheme of theirs can be made practicable, which I think is extremely difficult, I think the elector or the queen will be duped in it; and, of the two, I doubt it is more likely to fall upon the latter. What effect advances of this kind are likely to have on the elector, I am not able to guess; but am pretty clear that the States will never be prevailed with to enter into this scheme."

These indications of dignified firmness, however vague, were not unknown to Harley, and he began to be apprehensive lest the resignation of the treasurer and the Whigs at the same time, might be followed by that of the general, which might have spread too much alarm in the public mind, and frustrated the grand scheme for effecting a complete change in the administration. The queen, therefore, was persuaded to suspend her intention of dissolving the parliament, to remove the treasurer before a general resignation could take place, and to do it in such a manner as would induce the Whigs to remain in power; well knowing that their concurrent advice would prevail on the Duke of Marlborough not to relinquish his command.

CHAP. XCIV.—FORMATION OF TORY MINISTRY.—1710.

THE different attacks against the Whigs, Marlborough, and Godolphin, had been gradually and discreetly prepared, skilfully timed, and brought forward in such a progressive manner, as was calculated to try the strength of those to whom the government was confided, and at the same time to increase their divisions.

The result was fully answerable to the views of those artful politicians, by whom this change was effected. The Duke of Marlborough had been brought to bear successive mortifications, each increasing in degree, and to feel how little he could rely on the lukewarm support of the Whigs. On the other hand, the Whigs, equally jealous of the two ministers, had been lured by the most refined address; and to soothe their fears for the loss of their own power, each successive change had been represented as a mere temporary measure to gratify the feelings of the queen, and by no means intended to affect those principles, of which they were the champions.

These arts baffled the penetration of those great statesmen, who had a deeper knowledge of policy than of cabinet intrigues, or of human nature. They continued suspecting, yet confiding; listened to the overtures of Shrewsbury, as the organ of court favour; suffered themselves to be amused by his professions, and still deceived themselves in the hope that his interest would be employed for the preservation of the parliament, and, consequently, of their own power.

As the integrity of Godolphin was yet unimpeached, and as his financial talents were generally appreciated, a singular infatuation prevailed among his partisans, and was even entertained by Marlborough himself, that no attempt would be made against him till the parliament had been dissolved, and another secured more friendly to the Tory interest. They thus lulled themselves into security, at the very moment when the mine was sprung which involved them in one common disgrace.

The secret counsellors of the queen availed themselves of some peevish expressions, which the conduct of Shrewsbury

extorted from the treasurer at a cabinet council, and in the presence of the sovereign. In an altercation, which was, perhaps, purposely excited, he appears to have been provoked beyond his usual caution, and to have upbraided Shrewsbury, with signalising his admission to power by French counsels. The queen interfering, the minister probably hazarded some of those bold truths, which, however justified by circumstances, could not fail to prove grating in the royal ear, at the time when the aversion entertained against the Marlborough family recoiled on himself. The queen, however, did not appear to preserve any resentment for what had passed, though she treated him with studied coldness and reserve. Still, however, neither he nor any of his friends deemed his fall so near; and their whole attention appears to have been employed in the attempt to prevent the dissolution of parliament.

On the 7th, Godolphin had a long audience of the queen, in which he made many communications recently received from the army. Among the rest, he adverted to a plot to poison her majesty, which had been discovered to the Duke of Marlborough by some princess at the French court. He likewise imparted a design, which had long been in agitation, for a descent on the coast of Picardy. These communications the queen received not only without any appearance of dissatisfaction, but with marks of approbation. The conclusion of the letter, in which Godolphin gave the account of this audience, indicates, however, some species of opposition to the military plans of the general, which he could not venture to explain. "I think," he observes, "the safety or destruction of the parliament remains still under a good deal of uncertainty; and though that uncertainty occasions a great deal of mischief, yet I don't see the least inclination to relieve us from those ill consequences; though, at the same time, the queen seems to be convinced there is no safety but in the good success of the war; yet, as often as the necessary measures for compassing that end are proposed, *there is a lion in the way.*" *

From the queen's coldness, — from the secret opposition to which he here adverts, and from other causes, the treasurer seems to have suspected her intention to dismiss him;

* Letter from Godolphin, Aug. 7.

for the same day he had another audience of two hours, in which he took the resolution of representing the mischievous consequences of secret counsels, and her want of confidence in her ostensible ministers. He concluded with submitting to her decision, whether he should continue in office, offering to serve or not, as she should deem it for her interest, concluding with the categorical question, "Is it the will of your Majesty that I should go on?" The queen replied, without hesitation, "Yes!" *

With this answer the minister was satisfied, and quitted her presence, though he observed in her looks and manner unusual symptoms of embarrassment and gloom. He was, therefore, equally surprised and confounded, when, the next morning, a servant in the royal livery left a note with his porter, dated on the evening after the audience.

"*Kensington, Aug.* 7. — The uneasiness which you have showed for some time has given me very much trouble, though I have borne it; and had your behaviour continued the same it was for a few years after my coming to the crown, I could have no dispute with myself what to do. But the many unkind returns I have received since, especially what you said to me personally before the lords, makes it impossible for me to continue you any longer in my service; but I will give you a pension of four thousand a year, and I desire that, instead of bringing the staff to me, you will break it, which, I believe. will be easier to us both."

On the ensuing morning the queen briefly announced to the Duke of Marlborough the removal of his friend.

"*Kensington, Aug.* 8. — My lord treasurer having for some time showed a great deal of uneasiness in my service, and his behaviour not being the same to me as it was formerly, made it impossible for me to let him keep the white staff any longer; and, therefore, I ordered him this morning to break it, which I acquaint you with now, that, you may receive this news first from me; and, I do assure you, I will take care that the army shall want for nothing."

On the same day the ex-minister himself announced his unexpected disgrace.

"*Tuesday, Aug.* 8. — I wrote to you yesterday by the way of Ostend, and though I had not the least notice then of what has since happened, I believe it will be no great surprise to you, after the steps made here of

* Letter from Godolphin, Aug. 7, and a narrative of the duchess, which seems to be taken from this letter, or from other communications of the treasurer.

late, to hear the queen has, this morning, been pleased to dismiss me from her service. I shall send you a copy of the letter I had the honour to receive from her Majesty upon that occasion, with my answer to it. How the treasury is to be filled, I am not yet able to give any account; but I imagine it will be at first by a commission. What I am chiefly concerned for just now is, that you should take this matter in the manner that is most advisable for yourself and all the world besides.

"It is my opinion, that you should represent to the queen, that it is impossible for any body to imagine but you must be affected by this stroke in the most sensible manner, and to such a degree as will hardly leave you that heart and spirit which is necessary to carry on her Majesty's service for the future, with that success which you have hitherto had the good fortune to do; and that, therefore, you hope she will have the goodness to give you leave to return to England as soon as you find yourself incapable of being of any farther use to her service there; but by no means to think of leaving your post till you have had an answer from the queen to this letter, from which you will be best able to judge what step you are next to take.

"In the mean time, a council being summoned to meet to-morrow morning at twelve, there is a great variety of conjectures stirring, whether it is to dissolve the parliament, or declare its continuance by proclamation. By a nomination which I have just now heard of a new commission of the treasury, I should rather guess the latter, for it is such a one as will utterly disgust the Tories."

"*Aug.* 9. — Though my circumstances at present are a little discouraging, yet nothing can ever make me neglect doing what is best for the whole, or thinking of every thing that may be most for your honour and safety. I do, therefore, now, and resolve to continue to take the same pains and care I did before, that you may be effectually supported to the end of this campaign in the post where you are, in hopes this may enable you the better to persuade the States and the emperor not to break quite loose from the queen and England, but to expect, as patiently as they can, the opening of the session, or a new parliament. I continue still very much of the opinion, that either of them will be entirely for supporting the alliance, consequently will be wholly guided by you, as soon as you return to England. If any other method than this should be taken, the grand alliance must be dissolved, and England fall into immediate distraction and confusion.

"This, then, I lay down as the most probable method to save the whole from destruction, with most honour and advantage to yourself. I hope, therefore, you will govern yourself accordingly; and I pray God to continue the same success to you that you have hitherto had.

"Whatever you shall find necessary to represent to the queen, relating either to the subsistence of your troops, or to any thing else, which you wish may be furnished from hence, for your project, you may continue to write to me, and I will put as much of it as is proper into the hands of Mr. Secretary Boyle to show to the queen, or you may write directly to him, if that be easier to you; for his part has been very good to you and me, and I have reason to think will continue so.

"I have spoken particularly to Mr. Vryberg, to the minister of the duke of Savoy, and, to-morrow I shall do so to Count Gallas, desiring them all not to despond, and endeavouring to convince them, that 'tis the true interest of the allies to keep together, and expect the event of the parliament. The two former have seemed to me to be convinced themselves that this is right, but to fear they may find some difficulty of satisfying their principals in it.

"Mr. Boyle has told me to-day, that Lord Rivers is to go to Hanover, with compliments from the queen, but not to make any stay. I imagine the chief errand is, to propose to the elector the coming into your post another year; but I reckon Mr. Harley will give out it is for the invitation, and that the queen is very desirous England should have full satisfaction in that matter. It is certain that England is now bent upon this more than ever, and with a little more reason; but if it be true that the queen acquiesces in it, you will allow me that it is no small instance of Mr. Harley's power."

We cannot but admire the patriotic and disinterested sentiments which the ex-minister exhibited; yet we must regret that his timid and cautious advice, almost in every instance, palsied the spirit of his friend, and in this instance more than all. We must, at the same time, bear testimony to his incorruptible and honourable administration, which, while it economised the public money, left him only a scanty pittance of private property inadequate to the support of his station and dignity.* Indeed, had he not at this time succeeded to the fortune of his elder brother, Sir William Godolphin, this venerable statesman, who had so many years managed the treasury of England, would have been reduced to depend for support on the beneficence of his friend, the Duke of Marlborough. Nor can we sufficiently testify our concern, that the queen should have been so much misled, or so unmindful of his past services, as to neglect the payment of the promised pension, which he was too dignified to demand.†

The disgrace of Godolphin was speedily followed by the

* In his correspondence with the duchess, Mr. Maynwaring hints at the narrow circumstances of Lord Godolphin. "I can easily believe your grace has a sad story to tell upon the subject of Lord Godolphin's money matters, who will not be able to keep his family unless the Duke of Marlborough assists him, which I really think he should do." The duchess also states, that before he obtained an accession of fortune by the death of his brother, his estate, exclusive of what was settled on his son, did not exceed 1000*l.* a year.

† From a memorandum in the handwriting of the duchess, endorsed on the queen's letter to the treasurer. — See Chapter 113.

dismission of his son, Lord Rialton, from the office of cofferer of the household.

The whole party of the Whigs were panic-struck with the removal of Godolphin, who they soon found had been the only barrier that shielded them from the machinations of the Tories, and the antipathy of the queen. They held a meeting on the evening of his dismission, at Mr. Secretary Boyle's, to concert a plan of conduct; but, fondly persuading themselves that the new counsellors could not carry on the administration, for want of public credit and confidence, the only decision they adopted was, that of keeping aloof, till their opponents had fallen victims to their own weakness and inability. The successful party, however, judged more correctly, and hastened to mature their measures and ensure their victory. The treasury was immediately put in commission, at the head of which was Lord Poulett; but the real powers of the government were vested in Mr. Harley, who, the next day, supplanted Mr. Smith in the chancellorship of the exchequer.

Marlborough was deeply affected by the disgrace of his long-tried friend and able coadjutor, not only from personal affection, but from the detriment which he apprehended to the public service, by the loss of his financial abilities. For the first time in the course of his long and successful career, he felt that he stood alone, the mark of political enmity, envy, and faction; and that he had lost the coadjutor to whom he could impart his cares and difficulties, and in whose advice and faithful intelligence he could confidently rely.

We are naturally anxious, therefore, to trace his feelings and behaviour at this interesting period; but our curiosity is not fully gratified, because only a few of his letters have been preserved. They exhibit the mingled sentiments of indignation and spleen, resignation and despondency: while his principal care appears to have been directed to resume his confidential intercourse with the elector of Hanover, to preserve the integrity of the grand alliance, to prosecute his military operations with his usual vigour, and to keep up the spirit of his friends in England.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*August* 28. — The surprising news which I received by the last post, of the treasury's being put into commission, has occasioned in me very melancholy thoughts. I wish I may be mistaken, and that there may be

credit found for the support of the army; otherwise, France will, without a battle, get the better of the allies. Whatever happens, whilst I have life, I shall be faithfully yours. I have taken my resolution of troubling my head as little as is possible with politics, but apply my thoughts wholly how to finish this campaign, to the best advantage, and then shall be impatient of being with you. No doubt but Lady Marlborough gave you an account of Lord Somers's letter. I have sent my answer open, so that she may acquaint you with the contents."

"*Aug.* 30. — It is impossible for me to express the very uneasy and extravagant thoughts I have had since the news of your being out. The French will certainly be so heartened by our unaccountable proceedings in England, that whatever their difficulties may be, they will not think of peace, whilst they have hopes of our running into confusion.

* * * * * *

"Prince Eugene is so desirous of doing good, that whatever I should think for my service, he would undertake, even to the making of a journey to England. If you think any good use may be made of his kind offer, let me know your thoughts by Collins, this bearer, as well as every thing else you may judge proper for me to know; for till I see you, I believe you will not have many more opportunities of writing safely. I have again this day received advice and assurances from the elector of Hanover, of his steady resolution of being my friend.

* * * * * *

"I have opened my letter to acknowledge the favour of your two letters, by Ostend, of the 7th and 11th. I will, to the utmost of my power, follow your directions, and have this afternoon writ to the elector of Hanover. The whole proceedings at this time in England are so extravagant, that one would think they have no other view, but bringing every thing to distraction. When you can write with safety, let me hear from you; but, from henceforward, by the ordinary post, I shall not write any thing but what I shall expect Mr. Harley will see. The behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury is very unaccountable; for I do not see, in this scheme, that the Tories can be pleased no more than the Whigs. I hope and beg you will think so well of me, that after this campaign we may yet, for some few years, live in more quietness than these new vipers would have us."

"*Sept.* 4. * * * * The Amsterdam Gazette has acquainted the world with Lord Rivers's errand to Hanover. I own I wish the thing might be made practicable; since it is what might reasonably free me from the incumbrance I now lie under. Besides, I have of late received so many civilities from the elector of Hanover, that I should be glad to use my best endeavours to make it easy to him; but I think the Dutch and Prince Eugene would never be brought to agree to it, though the queen should declare never so much in favour of it. My resolution, is to be careful of behaving myself so in this matter that the elector may take it kindly of me. I am here lodged at the abbey of St. Andrew very much to my liking; but it is so near the town, that I fear the noise of the cannon and small shot, when the attack begins, will be troublesome. We shall send to-morrow some troops to invest St. Venant, which will be first attacked; for our being masters of that place will very much

help us in the reducing of this. The certainty of a new parliament makes every body that has any interest, desirous of going for England: if I refuse, they will take it unkindly; and if they go, I shall lose the service of a great many. Those that go only to England, I may expect some of them back; but for those that are obliged to go for Scotland, they can't return."

The letters to the duchess breathe the same political sentiments, softened by feelings of affection towards her. Amidst this revolution of parties, he was conscious that she had yet farther mortifications to undergo from the queen's resentment; and he endeavours to soothe her irritation, to restrain her conduct within the bounds of respect and caution, and to prepare her mind for her impending disgrace.

"*Aug.* 18. * * * * My intelligence is very positive, that there will be a new parliament, and that you must not flatter yourself, but expect every thing that can be disagreeable personally to yourself; for there is no barbarity but what you and I must expect."

"*Aug.* 25.—By your last letters, I believe this will find you at Lady Bridgewater's. To her and her lord, I desire you will make my kindest compliments. What you write in one of your letters, of assisting Mr. Lomax at St. Alban's, as things are now, I believe there will be no real opposition to the same members that served them in the last parliament; and really, as violences run, I would beg of you not to be at St. Alban's, neither before, nor at the election, fearing you might meet with some insult, which would be a mortification to me. What I hear from England gives me infinite trouble, there being no mischief but what may be expected. I have given your letter to Lieut.-general Wythers, and by the commission he tells me you have charged him, I should think you do not think things in so bad a condition as I do. I fear you are amused, and not told the truth; for, believe it, the queen will risk England rather than not vex you. She has at this time no resentment but to you, me, lord treasurer, and our children. God knows how little I have deserved this, and his will be done. You shall ever find me with much tenderness, yours."

"*Aug.* 28.—I have received yours of the 8th, by Holland. That, as well as the rest of my letters, acquaints me with the surprising news of lord treasurer's being out. I must confess it was what I did not expect; but by my former letters, you might see that I was sufficiently prepared for mortifications. I send my answer to Lord Somers's letter open, that you may see what answer I make. From henceforward, I would beg of you not to write any thing, but what you would not care if it were seen, unless you should have a safe hand of writing.

"I intend to send Collins with the news of Bethune, and will order him not to return till he has a letter from you. I shall write by him; so that you will know when he is at London, for I believe you will now desire, till my return, of being at Woodstock, or with your children. We

have yet two months before this campaign can be ended, after which, I shall lose no time in sending to you; for I will not stay but a very few days at the Hague. Our sickness continues; but I thank God I have my health, and will take the best care I can to keep it. My poor coachman, that has lived so long with me, died of this fever yesterday; and poor Daniel, my favourite cook, is not yet recovered; but they hope he will. I am, tenderly, yours."

"*Aug.* 30. — I acquainted you in some of my former letters, that the project most likely to be agreed upon was, that Lord Godolphin, you, and I, were to be dropped, as is pretty plain now, by the discarding of him, and that the whole will be put in execution as soon as the conjuncture can allow of it. I beg of you to keep out of the way; for nothing would please more those who wish us ill, than to have a pretext for the removing of you, which would to me be a much greater mortification than any other personal thing to myself. As I receive mortifications, and a harsh return from my own country, if I were capable of receiving pleasure, it would be one to see the kind concern all the foreigners show me on this occasion; but my apprehensions are, that the heats of faction are grown so very great, that we can't avoid, sooner or later, fatal disturbances in England, by which the nation may be ruined, and France reap the advantage. I have this day received fresh assurances from the elector, and to-morrow I shall write to him in such a manner as he may be assured of my being very sensible of his kindness expressed at this time. Pray take the best measures you can with Mr. Vanbrugh, that all the work possible may be done this summer at Blenheim.

* * * * * *

"This being the only safe opportunity I am like to have for some time, I must earnestly desire you not to be amused, but to be thoroughly convinced that a steady resolution is taken to do all the mischief possible to you and me, and all that belong to us.

"I have opened my letter to thank you for yours of the 7th and 11th, by Ostend, and by them see they are endeavouring to put in practice what I was informed concerning us. I have followed my friend's advice, by writing this afternoon a letter to the elector of Hanover. I am vexed, but be assured that I shall not do my health any prejudice; for whilst you are kind, and some few friends just, I shall contemn the barbarous usage I meet with."

From the preceding narrative it will fully appear that the dismission of Godolphin and the dissolution of parliament had long been the objects of the queen and her secret cabinet, and that nothing could have frustrated their designs but that union and decision in which the heterogeneous ministry were so lamentably deficient. It is, therefore, a matter of surprise, that the dismission of Godolphin, to use the expression of Lord Sunderland, "should have stunned the Whigs," and that they should still be so infatuated as to suppose that they could preserve the parliament, or at least maintain their

ascendency in the new elections. In fact, although there was not the smallest room to doubt or deliberate, we still find them acting the same indecisive part, pressing the general to retain his command, in hopes that his successes would awe the queen, and cherishing the futile prospect of future retaliation.

These motives and opinions are detailed in a letter from their organ, Lord Sunderland.

"My Lord; "*August* 24.

"I have the honour of yours of the 30th, by Collins, and do heartily congratulate the taking of Bethune, and hope in God you will have the remaining part of the campaign attended with your usual good success; though it is a grievous thing to think of the usage you meet with, at the same time that you are doing what you are abroad, with success. This proceeding is certainly without example, and you may depend upon it, that the Whigs, to a man, have a right sense of it, and upon all occasions will act in whatever manner you shall think right. And, I am sure, if you, Lord Godolphin, and the Whigs do act cordially and vigorously together, without suspicion of one another, which I am sure there is no reason for, it is impossible but every thing must come right again; especially since the elector of Hanover is so right as he is, as appears both from what you know, as well as from letters I have seen from thence myself. For that affair of Hanover is, and must be our sheet anchor, and if it be rightly managed, you will be effectually revenged of all your enemies; and that by securing your country, the only sure way, and you will be, if possible, a greater man than you have ever been yet; and you, and your friends, Lord Godolphin and the Whigs, must carry your point. This is the unanimous opinion of Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, Lord Orford, the duke of Devonshire, and of all their friends; and there is nothing in which they can assist you, in this or any thing else that is for the common interest, and for supporting you yourself, that they won't do, with the utmost zeal, either in or out of parliament; and this they have given me commission to assure you of, and I will be guarantee for the performance. I will answer for the like behaviour in Lord Wharton, when he returns from Ireland, and I don't much doubt the duke of Newcastle, though a place of 3000*l.* a year is a temptation to his inclinations. I should not have omitted the lord chancellor, who, though he is now in the country, is in every respect as you can wish him.

"By all the accounts we have as yet from the country, there is no reason to apprehend, but we shall have a good parliament, and if so, and that our allies will but have patience (as I don't doubt by your influence they will), all these matters will be soon set right again. The good news from Spain will go a good way towards that.

"In Scotland the elections of the commons are like to go very well, their church being much alarmed; but that of their peers will be bad. However, it will be of great service if the lords and commons of that country, that are in the army, can be spared, and have leave to come

over without loss of time; and in the mean time write to their friends, which I hear Lord Stair has done very warmly and very heartily.

"I have nothing more to trouble you with, but that, in the conclusion, all things may turn to your satisfaction; for the present madness cannot last.

"I send you one of the queen's in case you have not seen it before. I hear 225* is terribly mortified at it, but he will be pelted a good deal more before it is over."

We cannot omit a characteristic letter written at the same time by Lord Halifax, which strikingly evinces the struggle in his mind, between shame for his recent duplicity, and regret at being made the tool of the party by whom he was duped.

"My Lord; "*August* 25.

"As your grace orders it, one is able to keep up a frequent correspondence, in writing to you upon every victory. I congratulate you, from the bottom of my heart, on your continued success, in the midst of the mortifications that are put upon you daily. This last of my lord treasurer afflicts me beyond measure. I took great pains and went great lengths to prevent it, but found at last that was the only obstacle to an accommodation, that might not have been overcome. I thought nothing else worth contending for without it. I own myself highly obliged by my Lord Godolphin, and I will say to your grace, that if all passages were fully known, you would think the part I acted towards him more grateful and more kind than are usual amongst us; but as there is generosity in acting such a part, there is good breeding and good manners, in not explaining particulars that have not been successful. I am mightily pleased to find by your letter, that you are so favourably disposed to accept of my friendship and service. You may depend upon more than I will profess, if you think me worthy of that character. I give you a thousand thanks for the advance you have given Mr. Burton; 'tis a very sensible obligation to me."

At length the great Whig leaders became sensible of their impolicy, in forming a separate interest from that of Marlborough and Godolphin, and in listening to the insidious overtures and plausible promises of Harley and Shrewsbury. They now felt a conscious shame for not having supported the spirited resolution of Marlborough to retire, unless Mrs. Masham was dismissed, and for tamely submitting to the disgrace of Sunderland, who, from his connection, was selected as a victim, to mortify them and the general at the same time. Still more did they deem themselves to blame,

* Probably the duke of Somerset.

for their petty jealousy of Godolphin, and the selfishness with which they suffered him to be sacrificed. Convinced, too late, of their past impolicy, and satisfied that their whole support depended on acting cordially with Marlborough, we find them professing their attachment to his person, and their determination to share his fate.

Amidst these alarming prognostics, they still, however, lingered on the threshold of power, with the hopes of excluding any more Tories from the offices of government, as well as of preserving the parliament; and almost a month elapsed before we trace among them any indication of spirit. Harley continued to avail himself of this indecisive and wavering conduct, and pursued his artful policy. He prevented the resignation of the duke of Newcastle, by promising him the place of chief justice in eyre of the royal forests beyond Trent; and though the co-operation of Halifax could not be secured, he neutralised him, by suffering several of his friends to remain in office. He likewise employed the influence of the queen to retain the duke of Somerset in his post of master of the horse. He even affected to be jealous of the preponderance of the Tories, evinced an anxiety to place St. John and Harcourt in subordinate offices, and, as if with a view to form a moderate administration, made the most pressing and repeated overtures to several of the Whigs. Of these he particularly addressed himself to the lord chancellor, Lord Mohun, and Mr. Walpole. In making these overtures, he artfully insinuated that a Whig game was intended, and that his great object was to preserve the Protestant succession; but his arts were ineffectual, and they all three honourably resisted his offers and promises. His overtures being repelled, he soon found that his plan of a motley administration was impracticable. He therefore changed his deportment, and hastened to free himself from those whom he could neither gain nor conciliate, and whose places were coveted by his own partisans.

At his instigation, the queen withdrew from Somers her confidential attentions, and treated him with coldness and reserve. The great leader of the Whigs being disgusted by these moritfications, declared his resolution of withdrawing from office, and his example was followed by his colleagues and adherents. On the 19th he resigned, with the duke of

Devonshire, and Mr. Boyle. His place was transferred to the earl of Rochester; the duke of Buckingham was nominated lord steward; and the seals of secretary of state were conferred on Mr. St. John. The post of governor of Ireland was given to the duke of Ormond, on the resignation of Lord Wharton, and Lord Orford prudently threw up his situation at the board of Admiralty, though strongly exhorted by the Whigs and Godolphin to remain in office. The presidency of the board was vested in Sir John Leake, Sir George Byng retaining his place; the new members were, Aislabie, Sir William Drake, Wishart, and Clarke.

Lord chancellor Cowper resigned, notwithstanding the earnest solicitations of Harley, and the repeated commands of the queen, who replaced the seals three times in his hands when he offered them.* The great seal was put in commission, the members being Sir Thomas Trevor, and barons Tracy and Scroope. Sir Simon Harcourt was made attorney-general; soon after, lord keeper; and finally, chancellor. As a peculiar mortification to the Duke of Marlborough, and notwithstanding his earnest solicitations with the queen, Cardonel was removed from the office of secretary at war, and his place filled by Mr. Granville, afterwards Lord Lansdowne.

Since the accession of William no change of ministry had ever been carried to such an extent; for before the close of the year, not a single Whig, with the exception of the dukes of Newcastle and Somerset, retained any office of importance. Thus ended the most glorious administration, which had ever directed the affairs of the country since the reign of Elizabeth. However we may lament the want of harmony and consistency, which reigned among the members of this great and illustrious body; yet their defects, which were merely personal, and inherent in human nature, are lost in the consideration of their public merits, and heighten, instead of abating, our regret at their fall.

Had these changes, as is usual in the quarrels of party, only affected men, not measures; the reign of Anne, not those of her successors; private, not public interests; we might have considered them as of merely temporary concern. Respecting parties and factions, in so distant a period, we

* Lord Cowper's Diary — Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. v.

should not have experienced any anxiety, whether the Whigs or Tories gained the ascendency; whether Godolphin or Harley presided at the treasury; whether Sunderland and Boyle, or Dartmouth and St. John, held the seals of secretary of state; or whether the duchess of Marlborough or Mrs. Masham was mistress of the robes. But as these changes had the most baneful influence on the operations of the war, as they retarded the conclusion of peace, repressed the energy, and shackled the exertions of the great commander, and dissolved a system of policy seldom paralleled in grandeur and effect; we cannot but lament that the petty squabbles of the bedchamber, the jealousies in the ministry, and the interested ambition of secret counsellors, should have concurred with the antipathies of the queen, in producing that inauspicious change which so deeply injured the welfare of England and Europe, and of which we still feel and deplore the fatal effects.

The military operations were no longer under the control of the general; every proposal was to be submitted to the secret council; he was often thwarted in his grand designs; and he could not venture to carry into execution those bold projects which might have at once terminated the war, from apprehensions lest he should be exposed to the malice of his political enemies, if he should fail of success.

A melancholy instance of the mischievous consequences derived from the new measures was, his reluctance to engage in an enterprise against Calais or Boulogne, which was strongly recommended by Godolphin, as the means of raising the drooping spirits of the Whigs, and preventing, by so splendid an achievement, the dissolution of parliament. A few extracts from his letters will be sufficient to prove this fatal truth, and to exhibit the strong feelings of a mind, discouraged by detraction, and depressed by a dread of malicious hostility.

"*August* 2. — * * * * You may be assured that the king of France is so encouraged by what passes in England that he has taken a positive resolution for the continuation of the war, and reckons upon my not being employed this next campaign. The little consideration that the queen has for you and me makes it not safe for me to make any proposal for the employing those regiments now in the Isle of White; though, if things were as formerly, I could attempt a project on the sea-coast that might prove advantageous. But as every thing is now, I dare attempt

nothing, but what I am almost sure must succeed; nor am I sure that those now in power would keep my secret."

"*August* 4. — * * * * I find by Mr. Secretary's letter that the expedition to the West Indies is not to proceed. I have made no proposition how those regiments might be employed; for as the disputes and disorders you have in England make me more cautious than heretofore, so if I should undertake the project for Boulogne or Calais, England must be at the expense of ammunition and meal, which your letters that speak so dismally of the credit make me afraid of making any proposal. Besides, I now feel, though I mean never so well, should I not have success, I should find but too many ready to blame me; so that if I am more cautious than heretofore I hope the queen will approve of it, when, at the same time, I promise that no opportunity that the enemy may give shall be neglected. But I must have a care of myself, to be the better able to serve her hereafter."

"*August* 11. — I am of opinion, that after the siege of Aire, I shall have it in my power to attack Calais. In that case many things must be furnished by the fleet from England, and then the more troops you could spare from England the better. This is a conquest that would very much prejudice France, and ought to have a good effect for the queen's service in England; but I see so much malice levelled at me that I am afraid it is not safe for me to make any proposition, fearing, if it should not succeed, my enemies might turn it to my disadvantage."

Indeed, we have not only the authority of the duke and Godolphin, but the acknowledgment even of the enemy, in regard to the mischiefs derived from this fatal change. The king of France saw with pleasure the machinations which were passing in England, and anticipated the fall of that ministry, and the dissolution of that parliament, whose exertions had driven him to the brink of ruin. Even in the midst of the transactions at Gertruydenberg, he made clandestine overtures to the secret advisers of the queen, with the hope of establishing that separate negotiation with England in which he was afterwards successful. We likewise find Torcy himself triumphantly declaring, "What we lose in Flanders we shall gain in England." Encouraged by this hope, Louis secretly ordered Villars to act on the defensive; and notwithstanding the distresses of his subjects, and his financial embarrassments, protracted the war, under the conviction that the queen and her new ministry would moderate their demands, and accede to more favourable conditions of peace. We acknowledge with regret that his hopes were soon fulfilled; we feel with concern that England was blindly engaged in contributing to her own dishonour, and in furthering the interests of the enemy.

Chap. XCV. — Dissolution of Parliament. — 1710.

While the arrangements for the new administration were pending, the triumphant party resorted to one of those expedients which are at once calculated to awaken enthusiasm, and ascertain the popular sentiments. Sacheverell was the political puppet employed on this occasion. His zeal having been rewarded by the presentation to a valuable living in Wales, he made a solemn progress through the country, to take possession. The scheme fully answered its purpose. Multitudes poured forth to hail his progress; the nobility, gentry, clergy, and people vied in their demonstrations of joy and exultation; cavalcades escorted him from town to town, and from village to village; the roads were lined, the hedges covered with spectators; steeples were illuminated, and sumptuous feasts prepared in every quarter for the triumphant guest. In fact, never was a victorious commander, a distinguished patriot, or a beloved sovereign, welcomed with more general or enthusiastic tokens of applause than this miserable tool of faction.

Encouraged by this ebullition of public feeling, the ministry anticipated the satisfactory result of a new election. Accordingly, a royal proclamation, on the 26th of September, announced the dissolution of parliament. A violent struggle ensued between the two parties, which, in zeal and activity, was almost unprecedented; and, on this occasion, we have again to be surprised at the spirit of infatuation which possessed the ex-minister and the Whigs. Had Marlborough given credit to the assertions of his principal correspondents, he would have concluded that the Whigs would have retained their ascendency. Godolphin flattered himself with the hopes of this favourable result. Even Somers, cautious as he was, fell into the same error; and Sunderland, with his characteristic ardour, observes to the duke, — "Mr. Harley and the duke of Shrewsbury are determined to make thorough business of it, and the parliament will be dissolved in a few days; but there is to comfort one, that by all the accounts from the counties there is like to be a good election, so that the advisers of this dissolution, and the setters-up of the hereditary right, as they call it, may possibly pass their

times yet worse, in a new parliament, than they would have done in this."

But Marlborough was undeceived by the more calculating judgment of Walpole and Craggs, who did not hesitate to declare that the ferment of the nation, in favour of the Tories, was so great, as to ensure for them a majority of one-third in the new parliament; and their calculations proved to be well founded. The hopes, therefore, which had been vainly cherished, on the event of this appeal to the feelings of the people, speedily vanished; and while the Whigs had another cause to deplore their infatuation and want of foresight, Marlborough felt himself more insulated, and foresaw the still greater persecutions to which he was devoted, now that the only barrier was removed which had hitherto screened him from the malice of his enemies.

In no one instance did he feel more the loss of his friend in the treasury, and that spirit of personal persecution which was industriously excited against him in the new parliament, than in the conduct of the government with regard to the building at Blenheim. This edifice was announced as a monument of national gratitude, worthy of the country by which it was given, and of the services it was intended to commemorate. Some of his friends, particularly the duchess and Lord Godolphin, were desirous that it should be built on a moderate scale, and more adapted to comfort than magnificence; but he, considering it as a public work, had approved the plan of Vanbrugh for a magnificent building, which was not to yield in extent or ornament to the proud fabric of Versailles. The design, sanctioned by the queen and cabinet, was ordered to be carried into execution; and her majesty, as if anxious to anticipate the completion of so splendid a work, directed a model to be placed at the royal palace of Kensington.

Hitherto this structure had proceeded with all the rapidity which the grandeur of the undertaking permitted, and the requisite supplies of money had been regularly issued by the treasury. In the recent contests of party, however, this great national monument had been singled out as the object of invective; and *the golden mine of Blenheim* had been repeatedly mentioned with sarcastic affectation by the Tory members of the House of Commons. No sooner, therefore,

were the ministry changed, and a new board of treasury appointed, than recourse was had to so proper a subject to annoy the feelings of the duke. With a total disregard to the public engagements, they immediately started objections to the expense, and did not disdain to resort to the most contemptible artifices, in order to throw the remainder of the burthen on the great general, whose achievements it was designed to signalise and reward.

With this view, attempts were, underhand, made to induce him to issue his own orders for completing the edifice, and the workmen were encouraged to apply to him for the payment of their wages, which were in arrear in consequence of the suspension of the treasury warrants. Had he incautiously fallen into either of these snares, he would not only have been liable to satisfy all demands, but would have been burthened with the entire expense of finishing the remainder of the work. He therefore refused to issue any orders, or to pay any arrears, leaving the execution and the management to the commissioners appointed by the treasury, in pursuance of the royal orders and the original warrant.

Failing in their attempt to prevail on the duke, the agents of government applied to the duchess ; and we find, on this subject, an artful letter from the architect, representing to her grace that the works were suspended for want of money, that several persons had already advanced considerable sums for the purpose, and that many more would follow the example, if her grace would write a letter to him or Mr. Travers, declaring that whatever might happen the workmen should not suffer. The duchess, however, had too much penetration to be deceived by this manœuvre; and she not only refused her consent, but even suspended the progress of the works and dismissed several of the workmen.* At length, and not without considerable difficulty, the application of the duke extorted from the queen a warrant for so much money as was merely adequate to the expense of covering in those parts of the structure which would have been damaged by an exposure during winter.

Amidst these difficulties, the duke was naturally anxious

* In an endorsement by the duchess on this letter of Mr. Vanbrugh, she wrote: " Instead of complying with him, I stopped the works in 1710, until the crown should direct money for it."

to ascertain from the architect the amount of the preceding expenditure, and the sums which would probably be necessary for finishing the remainder. On this subject we find several curious letters from Vanbrugh, one of which, dated June 11. 1709, specifies the terms of the original contract, and states the expense requisite for the completion. According to this account, the first estimate for the house and wings was between 90,000*l.* and 100,000*l.*; and the same sum would be required to complete the whole, including gardens, bridges, and other exterior appendages. By another account, of June 6. 1710, 134,000*l.* had been already expended, and the whole, when finished, was to cost 250,000*l.*; but, by subsequent estimates, we find the whole expenditure raised to 287,000*l.* *

Several of the duke's letters at this period to the duchess are filled with instructions on this subject, which is likewise adverted to on many occasions in his subsequent correspondence.

"My opinion is that you and I should be careful of leaving the disposition of carrying on the building at Woodstock to the queen's officers."

"*Oct. 25. and* 27. — It is our best way not to give any orders, but to let the treasury give what orders they please, either for its going on or standing still. By the enclosed letter they will lay all the misfortune (of not being covered in before the winter) upon the directions you gave for discharging the workmen. I do earnestly beg that you will tell Mr. Wise to receive his directions from the treasury, and that somebody proper for the building might do the same; for it no way becomes you or me to be giving orders for the queen's money. This is what I desire, and if I am right, I beg you will be advised by Lord Godolphin, which may be the best way of putting it in execution. I also beg of you to let Mr. Maynwaring know that I beg the favour of him to manage Vanbrugh, so that he may not be angry; for that would be a pleasure to those that wish us ill. Upon the whole we live in a very disagreeable age, in which we must expect no favour."

* Sir John Vanbrugh, who gave in these progressive estimates, was celebrated as a poet and dramatist, as well as architect. His architecture was bitterly assailed by the wits of the time, whose jokes were better than their criticism. More competent judges of architecture have found grandeur and solidity, and not heaviness, in the masses of Blenheim, and in others of his buildings. Sir Joshua Reynolds said that "Vanbrugh's fate was that of the great Perault; both were the objects of the petulant sarcasms of factious men of letters, and both have left some of the finest monuments which, to this day, decorate their several countries, — the façade of the Louvre, Blenheim, and Castle Howard."— Ed.

"*Oct.* 30. — You know my opinion, that neither you, nor I, nor any of our friends, ought to meddle in their accounts, but to let it be taken by the queen's officers, as they always ought to be. She is the mistress of her own money, and, consequently, of the time of finishing that house. Whilst Lord Godolphin was in, and I had the queen's favour, I was very earnest to have had it finished; but, as it is, I am grown very indifferent. For as things are now, I do not see how I can have any pleasure in living in a country where I have so few friends; and, after what has passed, it would be no surprise to me if I heard that the earl of Abingdon were again lord lieutenant of Oxfordshire."

"*Nov.* 9. — I must say it is a great trouble to me, to find you have so little confidence in my real kindness and esteem for you, as that you could be uneasy at any thing that could pass between such a man as Mr. Vanbrugh and myself. My temper is, to quiet every body if it were possible; and I hope those who have been so officious as to give you an account of this letter, will get you a copy of it, and then you will see that it is impossible to have said less in answer to his letters, full of expressions, and some compliments.

"I have received yours of the 23d, with the copies of your letters concerning the accounts of the building at Blenheim. What you say in them is very reasonable; but, as we are now, it is no way proper for us to be directing the queen's money, so that I beg of you that they may have their own methods, both as to the accounts past and to come; for I am sure I will give no directions, being very sure, if you or I should, fault would be found."

"*Nov.* 24. — I am glad to see by yours of the 7th, that you have left the business of Blenheim entirely to the queen's officers. I am persuaded that your method is the most reasonable; but, in this conjuncture, we must meddle as little as is possible."

Although in disfavour with his sovereign, overwhelmed with slander and invective, and thwarted in every measure, both public and private, the great commander was yet too highly respected abroad to be set aside like a mere ministerial tool. His services were still deemed necessary, and the new ministry, feeling the consequence they could derive from his countenance and support, spared no pains to detach him from the party with which he had been long identified.

Overtures were accordingly made to him by the queen and the principal ministers, and insinuations were thrown out, that if he would coalesce with them he might regain the royal favour, and be placed in the highest situation to which a subject ought to aspire. But the conditions which they required could not be accepted without the loss of his honour, and a total dereliction of his principles. To use the words of Mr. St. John, "he was to abandon the Whigs, his

new friends, and take up with the Tories, his old friends; to engage heartily in the true interests, and no longer leave his country a sacrifice to rapine and faction. He was, besides, required to restrain the rage and fury of his wife. These offers were coupled with threats of an impeachment, and boasts that sufficient evidence could be adduced to carry a prosecution through both houses." *

To terms so degrading, and probably conveyed in language no less offensive, he made such a reply as became his character. He declared his resolution to be of no party, to vote according to his conscience, and to be as hearty as his new colleagues in support of the queen's honour, and the welfare of the country. So spirited and independent a reply did not satisfy the ministry; and from this moment they adopted a more decided resolution, to single him out as a victim of hostility and persecution.

Notwithstanding the frank and manly part he had acted in this transaction, the mere fact of his negotiation with the new ministers, was sufficient to awaken the jealousy of Godolphin, the duchess, and the Whigs. He found it necessary, therefore, to satisfy his friends. In reply to the reproaches of his wife, which he keenly felt, he justified his conduct with equal manliness and candour.

" *Oct.* 4. — Having this safe opportunity of writing by Mr. Craggs's son, I will answer your two letters of the 4th and 7th from the Lodge.

" I find by what Mr. Maynwaring has said or writ to you, you are jealous of my acting so with Mr. Harley or the Tories, as that the Whigs may have reason to be angry. In the first place, I should not, at this time, have been where I am, if it had not been unanimously desired by all the heads of the Whigs. By the same advice, I have made steps to the elector of Hanover, who has entered very kindly into my concerns. The States, the emperor, and the elector, all three have engaged me to continue with the army, which I suppose is, and will be approved by the Whigs; for I am resolved of doing nothing but in concert with them. I detest Mr. Harley; but think I have lived long enough in the world to be able to distinguish between reason and faction. I have so good an opinion of Lord Godolphin and Lord Sunderland, that at my first coming I will consult every thing with them, and acquaint them with all that has past of late between me, the States, the emperor, and the elector.

" Nothing is more desired by me than to be quiet; my greatest con-

* Letters from Mr. Secretary St. John to Mr. Drummond, *passim*, particularly Dec. 20. 1710. — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 41.

cern is, if possible, to avoid the harsh usage which is most certainly resolved to be put in practice against you, for whom I must ever be more concerned than for all other things in this world. I am most particularly sorry that, at this time, you should have any reason to take any thing ill of Mr. Van., for I dare say he wishes us both very well, and we shall not have it in our power to do him much good. I do agree with you, that in some little time the Tories will be desirous to lessen the power and credit of Mr. Harley; but as long as Mrs. Masham continues they will find it very difficult. But that is their business, and I think it is much alike who is to do the mischief, when one is sure that every thing must go wrong.

"I do assure you, upon my honour, that I do, with all my heart, wish we may have a peace this winter; though, at the same time, I am very sensible it will give power and strength to Mr. Harley, the queen, and Mrs. Masham, to vex me, and those I wish well to. But if the nation be safe, and I have leave to enjoy my own, I shall envy nobody in power. It is no surprise to me the duke of Newcastle continuing; but I can't but think when he attends parliament he will act so as not to please them, for he is a good and honest man.

"Having writ thus far, I have received yours by Ostend, and the copy of Mr. Van.'s letter, which is certainly very offensive; but you have taken a very wise resolution of not making a noise. We are in circumstances that require great temper, by which I hope we may at last overcome our enemies. I think that those that take care of the building at Blenheim, when the winter season and the want of money makes the work to cease, should take care to cover the works, so as what is already done may receive no prejudice, and then it may remain *as a monument of ingratitude*, as Mr. Van. calls it in his letter. I hope the wainscot and every other thing, in your apartment and mine, is finished, so that we may live in that part of the house in the spring.

"We are masters of St. Venant, and I yet hope we shall have Aire by the 20th."

Still, however, the duchess was not satisfied, and appears to have applied to Lord Cowper, who was acquainted with his real sentiments and motives. This we learn by a letter to her from Lady Cowper.

"*Oct.* 23. — I am very glad my spouse's advice has been of any service to you. I am sure he is never better pleased than when he can be useful to your grace, or any of your family, and receives the honour of your confidence as he ought to do. He bids me tell you, that as to your fears of Lord Marlborough's yielding to the temptations laid before him, he hopes there is no reason to apprehend it; my Lord Marlborough having some time since acquainted him with all the particulars of the proceeding to that time, and withal expressing his detestation of quitting the interests of his country upon that bottom, or any other temptation whatsoever. He could not but mean, at that time, what he said, because he came hither, in a manner, on purpose, to tell my lord so; and if my Lord Marl-

borough has not been, since that time, so rough as quite to discourage their trying him farther, my lord thinks it is excusable, upon particular reasons, relating to my lord's circumstances, too long to be repeated. But, in the mean time, he is firmly persuaded my Lord Marlborough will be very firm and constant. I beg your grace will not mention this.

"Your description of the duchess of Shrewsbury is very good. I have heard much such an account of her, only with this addition, my lord duke looking a little grave, she chucked him several times under the chin, bidding him look up, amongst all the company. She is a great honour to a court."

At this juncture we find a singular letter from the duchess to Lord Godolphin, which announces her satisfaction in the conduct of her husband, and evinces no less gratification at being made the agent of his communications with the Whigs. It is inserted entire, as one of the few specimens remaining of her epistolary correspondence.

"*St. James's, Tuesday, Oct.* 17. — Since I came to town I find my pain worse, and I have been advised by that great physician, the duchess of Montagu, to send to Dr. Upton; but 'tis a great secret, and he has advised me to take balm of Gilead twice a day, by which, he says, I shall see, in a little time, whether it is any thing that will break.

"I was eased of a great deal of my fears for your illness before I left St. Alban's, Charles made such haste; and I hope I shall hear to-morrow that you are quite well; and if I am so, I will be sure to come to Newmarket, though Lord Sunderland is very desirous to have every body in town, and thought, the 14th of this month, that we should yet have a tolerable parliament, which is a wonderful opinion. His lady calls it a cheerful temper, and wishes she had it. Lord Cowper told me he had engaged to come to London, when Lord Sunderland summoned; and Lord Sunderland writes to me that he had had a very kind and honest letter. If the queen has persuaded him to do any thing contrary to right and reason, 'tis more strange than any thing I have heard of yet, and must proceed from the queen's great parts; for 'tis certain he does not intend to leave his old friends, whatever else he has done. Lord Marlborough writes to me that he is very desirous to know the opinion of the Whigs concerning the time of his coming to England; because the elector of Hanover desires it soon, and presses it; but I told him some time since that his friends desired the contrary. 'Tis certain that the elector is not the best judge of that matter, and I desire you to give me your opinion of it, and let me know it by Friday's post; for if I were then in a condition to travel, which I have reason to fear I shall not, I must send an answer to this question, and the reasons why Lord Marlborough should come, or not come to England; because I believe he would give them to the elector. But he is more than ever, if it be possible, determined to be thoroughly kind to the Whigs, with whom you may talk of it, as you have opportunities. I have seen all the letters sent

to Lord Sunderland. Lord Marlborough's is just such a one as I wished, and every thing relating to the elector mighty well, and several things that will divert you about Lord Rivers; but all that concerns the queen monstrous. The elector stopped more than once, when he was going to hurt you, by beginning a panegyric of you; and one thing that pleased me is, Lord Rivers is to have nothing given him.

"My Lord Marlborough approves very much of all that I said to Mr. Travers, upon the subject of Woodstock; and, I suppose, will not be less of that mind, when he sees the letters that Mr. Joyns writ, to fright me into sending them money. He adds, that they may pull down what they have built, if they please, he will never contradict it, which I was glad to see; for I think that building was the greatest weakness my Lord Marlborough ever had, and, being his passion, I am pleased he has overcome it; and I believe these ministers thought to ensnare him by it. Since you writ to me that 'tis said the duke of Somerset lost an election for 40*l.*, I must needs tell you a secret vanity, at the same time, very like him, that he gave the nurses at the christening of his daughter's child a hundred guineas, and yet, when they lived with him, he would not allow them better than a sea-coal fire.

"Nothing must be ever said, but to very secret friends, of what I write about the elector, Lord Rivers, and Mr. Freeman, for reasons I can't give now."

Another letter, from the duke to the duchess, is here introduced, to show that she continued to be the agent of these communications with the Whigs till the last moment before his departure from the continent.

"*Nov.* 9. — The copy of the letter of 1*, in my judgment, is extreme right, and if I could govern according to my own inclinations, it should be to be entirely quiet, and to meddle with no business. But as the conjuncture of affairs is at present, that is impossible; so that this enclosed to Lord Sunderland will acquaint you with my circumstances on this side of the water, and that I beg of him to lose no time in sending me to the Hague, the opinion of our friends mentioned in my letter; for I would be governed by the Whigs, from whose principle and interest I will never depart. Whilst they had a majority in the House of Commons, they might suspect it might be my interest that made me act in conjunction with them: but now they must do me the justice to see that it is my inclination and principle which makes me act."

In fact, the Whigs had soon sufficient reason to be convinced that Marlborough was not tampering with the Tories, by the treatment which he experienced at this particular period. As if sufficient mortifications had not already been heaped upon him, we find him subjected to an insult of a peculiar nature, because it affected his power as commander-

* The figure 1 is usually employed to designate Lord Cowper.

in-chief. We give the account in his own words to Lord Godolphin: —

"*Oct.* 4. — Every thing is done to lessen my credit here. By the last post Mr. Secretary wrote, by the queen's order, to acquaint Lord Argyle that his friends have desired leave for him to come for England, and she had allowed of it. This is so very extraordinary a step, that even the duke of Argyle came to me yesterday, to assure me that he had made no application, and that, when he should desire to go for England, he should apply to me for my leave. The folly and ingratitude of the queen make me sick and weary of every thing. Though I have it from the same man that gave the intelligence on Scotland, that, to his knowledge, France intends another landing at the time when the elections are to be, I can't believe it. However, to avoid any thing of my side, I have given notice of it in a private letter to Mr. Secretary, so that the queen and her present ministers may make what use they please of it; for had I writ it in my public letter, I fear it might have hurt the credit. I am entirely yours."

The general had still farther and greater insults to endure in the same capacity, by the sudden dismission of three officers on whom he had conferred peculiar marks of favour, and who were zealously devoted to his person. These were Major-general Macartney, Brigadier-general Honeywood, and, lastly, Lieutenant-general Meredith, who was peculiarly obnoxious to the queen, as having been presented by the duke with the regiment which she had intended to bestow on Colonel Hill. In a convivial hour these officers toasted the health of their brave commander and confusion to his enemies; at the same time using some very indiscreet expressions against the new ministers in general, accompanied with contemptuous gestures against Mr. Harley in particular. Without any previous communication to Marlborough, they were immediately cashiered, though with leave to dispose of their commissions to their successors, who were appointed by the queen. Among these we find Lord Orrery, against whom the duke had particular objections.

CHAP. XCVI. — PROGRESS OF THE WAR. — 1710.

FROM the irksome detail of political feuds, party bickerings, and ministerial changes, we revert to a more cheering subject, the military operations till the close of the campaign.

We have already noticed that after the capture of Bethune, the attention of the confederate generals was directed to the sieges of St. Venant and Aire, the possession of which places would secure the navigation of the Lys, and thus open a water-communication with Tournay, Lille, and Ghent. But we find, at this period, the letters of Godolphin filled with the most pressing importunities that Marlborough would carry into immediate execution the project against Calais or Boulogne. He confidently expressed his opinion that, after masking Aire and St. Venant, the army might advance and surprise Hesdin, and from thence march to the coast; adding that, if Marshal Villars ventured to resist, the allies might force him to a general engagement, and, if successful, penetrate to the capital of France.

Marlborough did not disdain to listen to the military advice of the ex-treasurer; but, however anxious to gratify his friend, he was too prudent to hazard such an advance into a hostile country, covered by strong posts, and to expose, at the same time, his flanks to the attack of a powerful army, under the command of the most able and enterprising among the French generals. He therefore deferred the consideration of the project, and, in conjunction with Eugene, proceeded to execute their original design.

Having reconnoitred the army of Villars, and found his position unassailable, the confederate generals proceeded against Aire and St. Venant, which were so situated as to permit a simultaneous investment. After a march of three days, they took post to cover the intended operation; the right, under Eugene, stretching to the Lys, near Terouenne; the left, under Marlborough, to Lillers on the Lave. The head-quarters of the prince were at the castle of Bleney, near Terouenne, and those of Marlborough at the abbey of St. André, near Lillers. On the 6th, the two places were invested. The attack of St. Venant was conducted by the prince of Orange, with 20 battalions and 5 squadrons; that of Aire was confided to the prince of Anhalt, with 40 battalions and 40 squadrons. The heavy artillery and ammunition for the siege were embarked on the same morning at Menin under a guard of several battalions from the neighbouring garrisons, and a detachment of horse from the army;

this convoy was to be landed at Marville, in the vicinity of St. Venant on the west.

Aire and St. Venant were both situated on the Lys: the latter was small, and protected only by ramparts of earth, forming nearly a regular hexagon, but rendered difficult of approach by marshes and inundations. It was garrisoned by 2700 men, under the orders of Brigadier Selve. Aire was a place of greater strength, being fortified with regular bastions, half-moons, and hornworks, and the ditches inundated by the waters of the Lys. It had a garrison of 14 battalions and three regiments of dragoons under the command of the brave and skilful General de Guebriant. At a little distance from the town was the fort of St. Francis, small, but strongly and regularly fortified. Both the town and the fort were protected by marshes and inundations. The approaches were carried on against both places as speedily as the nature of the ground and the want of besieging artillery would permit.

While the two generals were anxiously expecting the arrival of the convoy from Menin, they received information that it had been surprised and destroyed by the enemy. With a heavy heart Marlborough communicated the unwelcome intelligence to the duchess: — "Till within these three days, during these nine years, I have never had occasion of sending any ill news. Our powder and other stores for the carrying on of these two sieges left Ghent last Thursday, under the convoy of 1200 foot and 450 horse. They were attacked by the enemy and beaten; so that they blew up the powder and sunk the store-boats. I have sent to all our neighbouring towns, to see if they can help us with stores sufficient for the carrying on of this siege; for we hope we have already enough for the taking of St. Venant. Prince Eugene and myself are resolved not to raise this siege as long as we have any hopes of getting ammunition. I am, heart and soul, yours." Notwithstanding this heavy loss, and the difficulty of the approaches, St. Venant was in a few days reduced to extremity, and capitulated on the 29th.

Aire, however, maintained a vigorous and protracted defence. Much time was consumed in collecting the necessary supplies of artillery, and serious obstructions were occasioned by a succession of violent rains, to which he feelingly

alludes in a letter to Lord Godolphin: — "I did write to you last Saturday by Ostend, which I hope you have received. You will by that, as well as by this, see the fears I have, that the weather we have had for these last ten days will make it impossible for us to have any farther operation after the taking of this town, which has been so backwarded by the continual rains, that if they continue to *opiniatre* as they have done hitherto, and that the rains should continue, God knows when we shall have it; but take it we must, for we can't draw our cannon from the batteries. Our poor men are up to the knees in mud and water, which is a most grievous sight, and will occasion great sickness." In addition to these delays, the spirited resistance of the garrison under their intrepid and skilful commander prolonged the defence, and the reduction of this petty place was not accomplished till the 8th of November, when the garrison surrendered.

In announcing the capitulation, the British general gives due credit to the bravery of the garrison, as well as to the spirit and skill manifested in the defence: — "The garrison of Aire marched out yesterday 3628 strong, leaving upwards of 1600 men sick and wounded in the town. This defence was the best we have seen this year. Our foot are weak, but our horse are in a very good condition."

This conquest was purchased dearly by the allies; their loss in killed and wounded amounting to no less than 7000 men, exclusive of sick. The lateness of the season, and the continuance of heavy rains, prevented the execution of the project on the sea-coast, which had been approved by Eugene, provided the fortress had sooner surrendered, and the fine weather had continued.

We feel considerable regret in submitting to the reader a brief letter which the general wrote to Godolphin during the siege of Aire, as it affords a further proof of the decline of that influence which he had held under the preceding administration, and which was so necessary for the successful prosecution of the war.

"*Sept.* 8. — I am to thank you for yours of the 18th, and for your kind endeavours for the getting monies to be returned; this is the right season for our making good bargains for the magazines of forage: the Dutch have already made theirs; but as there is to be an advance of money to the undertakers, I am afraid of writing to the treasury about

it, till I hear of more returns for the subsistence of the army; for should they, in the humour they are in, want but one fortnight's subsistence, it would cause a very great desertion. Whilst you were in the treasury, upon an extraordinary occasion, my letter to Amsterdam or Antwerp would have procured one hundred thousand pounds; but now, though the necessity were never so great, I durst not venture. Our letters from France continue to confirm our second victory in Spain, and that the duke of Anjou is gone to Madrid: half this success last year would have secured us a good peace. God, who governs all things, will, I hope, make it end for the best. I have long wished, but never more than now, for a peace; for nothing looks well, I mean abroad, and you know how it is at home."

Marlborough, indeed, found the correspondence of his new colleagues very different from that of their predecessors. Instead of requesting his advice, and leaving to his judgment the plan of the campaign, and the arrangements with the allies, the queen, by her ministers, dictated both the military and diplomatic measures, in a manner calculated to display that jealousy which already began to operate towards the other members of the confederacy, and which ultimately produced that schism in the grand alliance so fatal to the interests of England and the welfare of Europe. We find Secretary St. John adopting towards him a dictatorial language, and imperious tone, to which he had been hitherto unaccustomed, and which was the more mortifying because it proceeded from one whom he had fostered as a son, and had introduced into office, and whose interest he had promoted with so much zeal as even to excite the disapprobation of his most intimate friends.

The general himself had been long sensible, that neither the emperor nor the States furnished their proper contingents, and had privately made continual representations on the subject; but, conscious that their deficiency arose more from inability than want of good will, he prudently avoided any vehement or public remonstrance, which might offend the two principal members of the grand alliance. He, therefore, as we have already observed, frequently laboured to soothe the resentment of the British cabinet, and maintained that harmony which was necessary to prevent a separation of interests, or a clandestine negotiation with the enemy. But the new ministers acted with far less delicacy and precaution; for it seemed to be their object to excite dissensions

and to irritate the other members of the alliance, that England might have a pretext for opening a secret negotiation with France. The new secretary was, of all others, best calculated to pursue this oblique and selfish policy. He cavilled with the minor princes of the alliance, he detested the Dutch, and he entertained equal inveteracy and contempt for the house of Austria. In the first official dispatch of consequence, which he addressed to the Duke of Marlborough, he bitterly inveighed against the lukewarmness and inactivity of the emperor:—"I have told his excellency Lord Townshend, in former letters, and I am commanded to repeat to your grace that the queen is extremely dissatisfied with the conduct of the imperial court, in almost every point relating to the common cause. Your grace will, by her Majesty's order, desire that the States join with the queen in representing to the emperor, that it is expected from him that he should, after all that has been done for his family by Britain and Holland, do something for himself; and that the queen and the States do insist upon his sending, at this juncture, on his own account, a reinforcement into Spain." In a letter, written soon afterwards, to Mr. Drummond, he employed the most contemptuous expressions against this principal member of the grand alliance. He observes, "that house of Austria has been the evil genius of Britain. I never think of that family, without recollecting the image of a man braiding a rope of hay, while his ass bites it off at the other end."*

He was no less disposed to listen to the overtures recently made by France, and which it now became the object of the British cabinet to encourage. With such feelings, a minister was not likely to imitate the example of Marlborough in casting aside petty jealousies and interests, and pursuing with integrity the grand principle of harmony and co-operation, which was necessary to secure a safe and honourable peace. All his official dispatches addressed by the secretary to the British general, sufficiently developed that narrow system of policy, which, under pretence of exacting the fulfilment of their mutual compact, tended to insulate England from all her allies.

* Correspondence of Bolingbroke, vol. i. p. 59.

We now close our account of the military transactions of the year with a brief review of the war in other quarters.

On the Rhine, the system, as we have already stated, was wholly defensive; and the French forces, being no less weakened than those of the allies, by draughts for the Netherlands and Dauphiné, no event occurred of sufficient consequence to illustrate the short command of General Groenfeld.

On the side of the Alps, where greater preparations had been made, the result was far from realising the grand designs conceived by Marlborough and Eugene.

The disputes between the duke of Savoy and the court of Vienna continued with unabated violence, and turned on the petty territory of the Langhes. The emperor offered to grant the Vigevenasco and the dependent villages; but as the Langhes were fiefs of the empire, he declared his inability to dispose of them without the previous consent of the Germanic body. He proposed, however, to grant the investiture, but to withhold the possession till the approbation of the Aulic Council was procured. This offer was rejected by the duke of Savoy, on the plea that it was taking from him with one hand what was given with the other. All the efforts of the Maritime Powers to compromise this dispute, were, unfortunately, unavailing; and the letters of General Palmes and Mr. Chetwynd, from Turin and Vienna, evince the fatal jealousies of the two courts, and the obstinacy with which they supported their respective pretensions. These bickerings produced the most disastrous effect: Victor Amadeus acted the same part as in the preceding year, by refusing to take the field, under pretence of indisposition. Accordingly, Marshal Daun assumed the command of the combined forces, and again found a formidable opponent in the duke of Berwick, who ably defended the avenues to the valley of Barcelonette, and took the necessary precautions to prevent the rise of the insurgents in Dauphiné and the Vivarais. The whole operations amounted, therefore, to little more than a series of marches and counter-marches; and before the close of October, the Austrian general retired behind the Alps; and Berwick, after sending a reinforcement of 34 battalions and 31 squadrons to the army of Noailles, placed the remainder of his troops in winter-quarters.*

* Mem. de Berwick, vol. ii. p. 93.

In consequence of this failure, and the inactivity of the insurgents, the expedition against the coast of Languedoc was abortive. M. de Seissan took possession of Cette without opposition, and advanced to Agde; but here terminated this petty incursion. The marquis de Roquelaure, governor of Languedoc, took instant precaution to prevent the rise of the insurgents, and despatched a body of troops against Cette; at the same time, the duke of Noailles marching from the frontiers of Catalonia against Agde, the project was abandoned, and the troops re-embarked, with the loss of fifty men.* The principal benefit derived from this well-projected, but ill-seconded enterprise, was that of retarding the mission of reinforcements from the army of Berwick to Spain, and the diversion which it created on the side of Catalonia and Aragon, and which prevented the intended junction of Noailles with Philip.

In Spain, the opening of the campaign appeared to promise all the success which the most sanguine imagination could anticipate from the magnitude of the plan, and the means provided for its execution; but on this, as on other occasions, the public hope was cruelly disappointed, by the operation of jarring interests and personal contentions between the generals.

From the vigorous and extensive preparations on both sides of the Peninsula, sanguine hopes were entertained of a successful campaign. Two armies assembled, in the spring, in Portugal and Catalonia; the former, under the sole command of the marquis of Villaverde, as Lord Galway was indisposed with the gout; the latter under that of Marshal Staremberg and General Stanhope. The Portuguese, who were earliest in the field, were, as usual, ill provided and ineffective; and the six regiments of native troops, which contrary to the opinion of Marlborough, had been raised on British pay, verified the unfavourable judgment which he had before expressed of such expedients. In the beginning of the campaign, the troops posted themselves at Elvas, and remained on the defensive, suffering the Spaniards, under the marquis of Bay, to occupy Miranda de Douro, and invest Braganza. Soon afterwards, the Spanish forces being diminished by the march of a considerable detachment, under

* Letter from M. de Seissan to the Duke of Marlborough, in August.

the marquis of Bay, to join the royal army in Aragon, the Portuguese recovered Miranda, raised the siege of Braganza, and proceeding to the frontiers of Estremadura, took some inconsiderable posts, but continued inactive under the pretence of waiting for the advance of the confederate army from Catalonia.

On the side of Catalonia, the allied forces took the field in the middle of May. Threatened on the north by Noailles, and opposed by a superior army under Philip on the frontiers of Aragon, Staremberg could only act on the defensive, and prevent the capture of Balaguer, by taking post at Agramonte. Here he was joined by General Stanhope, on the 29th of May, with 1000 recruits from Italy, and a supply of money. On the 7th of June, King Charles himself reached the camp; and thus the two rival princes were opposed to each other in the field; and though under the tutelage of their respective generals, Staremberg and Villadarias, they witnessed events not unworthy the presence of contending monarchs.

Still, however, the allied troops, from their inferiority of force, remained on the defensive, and six weeks were consumed in desultory operations. But towards the middle of July, the army was increased by the junction of 6000 veteran Germans, whom Admiral Norris had landed at Tarragona, with a supply of provisions. It was further strengthened by a corps of 4000 men from the force opposed to Noailles, who had marched in haste into Languedoc, to repel the British expedition which had landed at Cette.

Philip having been compelled, from want of provisions, to fall back towards Lerida, from whence he drew his supplies, the confederates rapidly advanced and overtook him near Almenara. After some delay, arising from a difference of opinion between Staremberg and Stanhope, the latter, eager for battle, "hectored the king into compliance,"* and towards evening, an irregular engagement took place at the passage of the Naguera, near Alfarez, in which Philip was defeated and driven into Lerida. Although the loss of the enemy did not amount to more than 1500 men, a panic spread among the Spanish troops, and they continued their

* Letter from General Carpenter — Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain — Somerville's Queen Anne.

retreat to Saragossa, hoping to prevent the allies from anticipating them at the passage of the Ebro. Being now joined by the marquis de Bay, with a reinforcement from the western frontier, they resolved to make a stand, and a regular battle was fought. The valour of the confederate troops, the skilful manœuvres of the generals, and the gallant intrepidity of Stanhope, ensured a complete victory; and the Spanish forces, reduced to a remnant of 8000 men, fled towards the frontier of the province of Soria. Philip himself retreated precipitately to Madrid, and, after a stay of two days, removed the royal residence and tribunals, amidst the tears and regret of his faithful subjects, to Valladolid, the ancient capital of Castile.

Meanwhile, Charles entered Saragossa in triumph, and, retaking possession of Aragon, conciliated the people, by restoring their darling privileges, and ancient constitution. Violent disputes, however, immediately ensued, as before, between Staremberg and Stanhope; the former proposing to pursue the retreating enemy, and intercept their communication with France, by the occupation of Navarre, which was almost defenceless. But the urgent remonstrances of Stanhope prevailed, and the allies directed their march to Madrid, expecting to be joined by the Portuguese, and hoping that the possession of the capital would secure the conquest of Spain.

On the 28th of September, Charles made a second triumphal entry into Madrid, preceded by an escort of 2000 horse. But an ominous solitude reigned in the lonesome streets; the greater part of the inhabitants followed their beloved monarch, and scarcely any remained except those who, from age, infirmities, or poverty, were unable to remove. Chagrin and vexation overwhelmed the disappointed monarch, and quitting his cavalcade in its progress to the palace of Retiro, he retreated hastily through the gate of Alcala, exclaiming, "Madrid is a desert!" and took up his residence at Villaverde. In such inauspicious circumstances he was proclaimed king of Spain and the Indies; the Bourbon government was dissolved: and the different departments of an ephemeral administration distributed among the few Spanish nobles who adhered to his cause.

We find a letter from King Charles written to the Duke

of Marlborough on the subsequent day, announcing his success; but betraying uneasy forebodings, and demanding instant succours.

"*Camp of Villaverde, near Madrid, Oct.* 29.

"My Lord Duke and Prince,—Having learnt some days ago by Prince Eugene of Savoy, that the letter which I wrote you from Balaguer, the 20th of July, had not reached you, although the letters I wrote of the same date to that prince were received, I inclose herewith the copy, not doubting that the present will be delivered to you more safely. I am persuaded, my prince, that you are already fully informed of the glorious progress which the common cause has at last made here, as I have advanced to the very centre of my monarchy, and have opened the way to reduce it entirely, in a short time, by the means of succours and support proportionate to the importance of the stake; and the benefits will redound to all Europe. You will know, however, also, how many efforts the enemy employ to re-establish their army with the troops they have still in Estremadura, and towards the frontier of Portugal; and that, besides, they expect a great number from France.

"I shall, however, omit no exertions to maintain myself this winter; and I hope also to contribute to the advancement of the common good, by some assistance out of the countries that I have just occupied; but it is well known that they are drained and ruined entirely, and it is necessary that I should be very promptly supported on the part of my good allies, to prevent the evident danger to which the common cause will be exposed, in case they are wanting, of losing the fruit of our victories. On the contrary, by their prompt arrival, we may be enabled to put a fortunate and honourable end to the war in these countries.

"Count Gallas and the baron de Zinzerling will give an exact account of the actual situation of affairs here, to which I refer; and from thence you will easily judge how much it is necessary at present to finish the work of the alliance, which the blessing of God has placed in so good a situation. I continue to feel the same particular confidence in your great zeal and good offices, not doubting that you will contribute, with all your power and credit, to an end as pressing as it is necessary and advantageous. This is what I earnestly recommended to you, and you may be assured of my perfect esteem and gratitude."*

A letter from General Stanhope to Lord Dartmouth, which was enclosed in a short note to the Duke of Marlborough, depicts the critical situation of affairs, and presents a striking picture of the desolation which prevailed in the capital, and of the surprising efforts made by the Castilians to counteract the reverses of their beloved monarch.

"*Oct.* 4. — Having halted near Saragossa ten days for bread, we arrived here on the 20th of September. The duke of Anjou removed to Valla-

* Translation from the French original.

dolid, from whence the duchess and young prince are gone to Victoria. The duke of Anjou was, on the 9th, at Valladolid, where he had quartered about 8000 men and was to march on the 30th, to join his army from Estremadura.

"We have despatched several messengers to our friends, pressing them to join us, since they have no enemy left on their frontier; and on the success of these instances, which we have repeated to them, will depend the fate of our campaign. They have, in a condition to march, 30 battalions of foot and above 3000 horse. If they will join us, we shall try to have another battle, which, in all probability, must be decisive. If they do not, we shall have some difficulty in making a retreat to Aragon, for the duke of Anjou will have above double our number of horse, and be equal, at least, to us in foot. The country is our enemy, and we are not masters, in Castile, of more ground than we encamp on. It will certainly be a surprise to your lordship to learn, that since the battle, not one officer in the duke of Anjou's service has left him, that the greater part of the grandees, all the civil and ministerial officers that reside at Madrid have followed him, insomuch, that at our first arrival here, the town appeared a desert. It is true, that since we have been here, great numbers of people of quality are returned, and express themselves to be well-wishers to us; but such is the turn they have conceived by the severe examples made by the duke of Anjou heretofore, that they dare not be active for us. We are, at present, without communication with Aragon, and uncertain whether the Portuguese will advance far enough to give us a communication with them."

In vain the confederate commanders expected the arrival of the Portuguese; in vain General Stanhope sent an official communication of the occupation of Madrid, and pressed their immediate junction, without which Spain would be irrecoverably lost. Unfortunately, Lord Galway being indisposed, and Lord Portmore not having yet assumed the command, there was no British general of authority sufficient to urge on these sluggish auxiliaries; and Villaverde, unwilling to act a subordinate part, sent to his court for instructions. The king of Portugal was instantly exhorted to detach 3000 foot, and 1000 or 1500 horse to the British forces; and the Marquis Das Minas proposed to take the command, and advance, without a moment's delay, to Madrid. A royal council was immediately held on this proposal, and, after much debate, it was negatived, by the influence of the duke of Cadaval, who was evidently in the French interest. The ministers of the allies being called to a conference, demonstrated the facility as well as the necessity of assisting King Charles. But these deliberations led to no result. The Portuguese complained that the subsidies, promised to them

by England and the States, had not been paid, and declared that they would not take upon themselves the charge of the expedition; while General Stanhope was apprised that nothing could be expected from the court of Lisbon.

Meanwhile, a scene of the most affecting nature occurred in the camp and court of the fugitive prince. While he was awaiting the uncertainty of his fate, at the head of his discouraged and desponding soldiery, Noailles arrived from France with a commission to ascertain the real state and resources of the country, and rouse the Spaniards to an effort in defence of their independence. In a solemn assembly of the nobles, he dwelt on the impossibility of furnishing adequate assistance from France, urged them to exert their native energies, and expatiated on the weakness and disunion among the allies. His eloquent appeal to the national honour and feeling was not ineffectual; they joined in a pathetic address, requesting aid from France, and at the same time manifested their own patriotism, by exertions still greater than they had made in 1706.

The youthful monarch still further roused the zeal of his loyal subjects, by the firmness and dignity with which he bore his reverse of fortune. He disdainfully rejected all offers of a partition, and announced his resolution to live king of Spain, or bury himself under the ruins of the monarchy. The spirit of enthusiasm kindled in the court and camp, rapidly spread from town to town, and from village to village, while every rank and class of people vied in their devotion to their monarch, and their sacrifices for their country.

In these favourable circumstances, Vendome, at the request of Philip, arrived to assume the command of the army. Cheered by the zeal and ardour which he witnessed in his passage, he anticipated the most propitious result, and hastened to give a proper direction to the national energy, and the intrepidity of the monarch. Leaving the allies to wear themselves away by dissipation and inactivity, or in destructive contests with the native peasantry, he employed the important interval in collecting and organising the troops. By extraordinary exertions, and in the short space of six weeks, he succeeded in forming an army of 25,000 men, completely appointed in the face of a victorious enemy. With this force,

his first object was to prevent the junction of the Portuguese with the army at Madrid, by taking post at the important pass of Almarez, on the Tagus. The event fully answered his expectations; for the Portuguese, ever lukewarm in the cause, now eagerly seized this additional pretext to remain on the defensive; and the forces at Madrid were left alone to contend with the storm which was rapidly gathering around them.

The exertions of the enemy were commensurate with the magnitude of the stake for which they were contending. The expedition of Cette having been frustrated by the vigilance of Noailles, and the want of support from the army on the side of the Alps, the French troops, thus set at liberty in Languedoc, joined by strong reinforcements from the army of Berwick, were poured into Catalonia. They prepared to invest Gerona, the key of the province on the north, and form a communication with the army of Philip, which was daily increasing in force, and expected to move in the direction of Aragon, to intercept the retreat of the allies.

The situation of the confederates being thus rendered highly perilous, their generals directed their whole attention to secure the safe return of King Charles, and the retreat of the army into Catalonia. After a royal proclamation, announcing the removal of the court from Madrid to Toledo, he quitted the vicinity of the capital on the 11th of November; and, on the retreat of the troops, the sound of bells and acclamations announced his own degradation, and the triumph of his rival. He took up a temporary residence at Cien-Pozuelos. While the confederates remained in these quarters, preparing for the departure of Charles and their own retreat, Philip had re-entered Madrid in triumph, amidst the enthusiastic acclamations of every class; and, after a stay of two days, to re-establish his government, rejoined Vendome, who had rapidly advanced, at the head of his cavalry, towards Guadalaxara, and was followed by the infantry, in hopes of still overtaking the allies in their projected retreat.

In the midst of these accumulating dangers, the Austrian prince took his final departure; and, under an escort of 2000 horse, withdrew through Aragon to Barcelona, where he arrived on the 15th of December.

Having secured the person of the prince, the primary care

of the confederate generals was, to extricate themselves from their critical situation. With the hope of outstripping their opponents, who were yet at a considerable distance, they retired, in three columns, through the mountainous country which borders the frontier of Castile. They had, however, fatally miscalculated on their own situation, and the efforts of the enemy. Harassed by swarms of partisans and hostile peasantry, loaded with baggage and plunder, and entangled in almost impracticable roads, their progress was slow and laborious; while their active and vigilant opponents were hourly gaining ground. On the 6th of December, the third column, composed of the 6000 British troops under General Stanhope, was overtaken at Brihuega, where they had inadvertently halted. As the Imperialists and Dutch were at a considerable distance in advance, they were surprised before they suspected the approach of the enemy, in sufficient force for an attack, and, after a desperate resistance of two days, in a town defended only by an antique wall, surrendered prisoners of war.*

* From the letter of General Stanhope to Lord Dartmouth, it evidently appears that this disastrous event arose entirely from miscalculating the distance of the enemy, not deeming it possible that the infantry should follow the cavalry in sufficient time to co-operate in the attack of Brihuega. In consequence of this erroneous estimate, Stanhope did not even place out-posts; and, he observes, that the hostile foot made a forced march of forty-five leagues in eight days.

Without entering into the merits of the case, we subjoin an extract from a letter written by General Pepper to the Duke of Marlborough, which will, at least, serve to show the want of discipline and concert among the allied forces.

"*March* 29. 1711. — As your grace never condemns any till heard, so I cannot doubt in meeting with your lordship's favourable opinion, when I assure you that I neither gave my consent for marching the British troops into Brihuega, nor was it any neglect of mine that we were taken for want of an out-guard, but to the contrary; it being ordered by me, and dismissed afterwards by Lieutenant-general Carpenter; nor did I give my consent in delivering up the town, and so far from knowing any thing of it, that I did not so much as know of a chamade being beat by Mr. Stanhope, having defended the town half an hour after the chamade was beat, entering the houses with dragoons dismounted, and having beat the enemy out, killing numbers of them, and they of us. I set fire afterwards to the houses, and maintained my former post; at the same time Mr. Stanhope did capitulate with the enemy, without making any disposition of retiring into the castle with the troops, which was abundantly stronger than the town, and might have been defended some days, and so surrendered us up without my opinion or consent."

Staremberg not receiving timely notice, advanced too late for their relief, and reaching the heights in the vicinity, observed the whole Spanish army drawn up in order of battle; while the melancholy silence which reigned in Brihuega announced the fate of his companions in arms. Thus doubly impelled to effect his retreat, he took up a strong position near Villa Viciosa, with the hope of amusing the enemy till night should enable him to withdraw. But the ardour of Vendome, and the spirit of Philip, were not to be arrested in the full career of success. He was vigorously attacked, and, after a desperate effort, repelled the enemy; but, dreading the renewal of the conflict on the ensuing day, he spiked the artillery on the field of battle, and made a hasty retreat. He reached Barcelona on the 6th of January, with a force of only 7000 men, the discomfited remnant of that army which was expected to effect the conquest of Spain. The natural consequence of this fatal reverse was the loss of almost all the conquests effected since the commencement of the war; for before the end of February the possessions of Charles were circumscribed to Balaguer and the two maritime fortresses of Tarragona and Barcelona, with the intermediate and dependent districts.

We cannot quit the subject of Spain without adverting to a strong proof of the effects produced by the decline of the Duke of Marlborough's influence in England. We must recall to the reader's recollection the repeated offers of King Charles to confer the government of the Netherlands on the British general, as a proof of gratitude for his eminent services. Marlborough, as we have already observed, declined the acceptance of this honourable and lucrative station, in consequence of the jealousies which it excited in Holland; but he had never relinquished the hopes that some favourable circumstances might arise to remove these objections. At this period, the ingratitude of his countrymen, and the prospect of unfavourable changes in the ministry, induced him to solicit the fulfilment of a promise so often and solemnly made, as affording an honourable retreat, should he deem it expedient to retire from England.

In conformity with his orders, Mr. Craggs, the British envoy at Barcelona, repeatedly sounded the Spanish ministers, but could obtain no precise or specific answer with

respect to the king's intentions. At length, however, he was drily told that their sovereign would himself apprise General Stanhope of his decision. The result of the general's application we give in the words of Mr. Craggs.

"His majesty made the following answer: that to tell him the truth, upon your grace's resigning your pretensions, he had immediately put that affair out of his own disposition into the hands of the imperial court; that Count Zinzendorf had informed him your grace had spoke to him of it, and that he would write to him to confer with you about it; that if he thought your grace desirous of that government, he would do his utmost to have it conferred upon you, so it might be with the general consent, and particularly of the Dutch."

CHAP. XCVII. — THE QUEEN AND DUCHESS. — 1710.

IN consequence of the continual rains, as well as of his apprehensions of heavy responsibility in case of failure, Marlborough relinquished his project against Calais or Boulogne; and on the surrender of Aire, repaired to the Hague, to fulfil the instructions from the British cabinet, as well as to concert with Eugene and the States the measures for the next campaign. If any thing could compensate for the indignities which he suffered from the Tories, it was the high consideration in which he was held by all foreign powers. As if he was the animating principle of the grand alliance, all the other members united in persuading him to retain the command; and Eugene particularly declared, that if his colleague retired, he would never again act in the Netherlands. He had, indeed, full need of all these consolations, to reconcile him to the melancholy state of affairs in England, of which his correspondents transmitted the most discouraging accounts.

On the 25th of November the parliament met, and the temper of the House of Commons was manifested by the choice of Mr. Bromley as speaker, notwithstanding a faint attempt on the part of the Whigs to re-elect Mr. Smith, who had formerly filled that office. The speech from the throne,

more guarded than had been generally expected, was the production of Harley, in conformity with his professed principles of moderation. The queen gave no assurance of attachment to the grand alliance, but mentioned, in general terms, the necessity of "prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour in all its parts, particularly in Spain, as the likeliest means, with the blessing of God, to procure a safe and honourable peace for us, and all our allies, whose support (she said) I have truly at heart." The emphatic mention of Spain was introduced, at once to convey a reflection on the general and on the late ministry, for the zeal which they had displayed in prosecuting the war in the Netherlands.

In the part of the speech addressed to both houses, the queen, according to the Tory phrase, declared that she was resolved to support and encourage the established church, to preserve the British constitution according to the union, and to continue the indulgence, by law allowed, to scrupulous consciences.

It was, however, deemed expedient to convey an assurance which was calculated to soothe the fears entertained for the Protestant succession, and to conciliate the electoral family. The queen, therefore, concluded with stating, "that all these may be transmitted to posterity, I shall employ none but such as are heartily for the Protestant succession, in the house of Hanover, for the interest of which family no person can be more truly concerned than myself."

The total silence observed on the grand alliance, and the successes of the preceding campaign, and the particular stress laid on the intended prosecution of the war in Spain, gave great offence to the Whigs, as well as to the personal adherents of Marlborough and Godolphin. The term indulgence, as applied to the Dissenters, was also disliked by both parties; being considered by the Tories as too liberal, and by the Whigs, as not equivalent to the word *toleration*.

The addresses from the two houses were mere echoes of the speech, except a particular expression, which was moved by Mr. Lechmere, a Whig member, in favour of the Protestant succession, and seconded by Harley, on the ground that the rejection of such a clause might appear a slight on the house of Hanover.

It was deemed extraordinary, that after the queen had

observed a solemn thanksgiving for the late successes in Flanders, no reference was made to the services of the Duke of Marlborough, nor any indication given by the ministry to move the usual vote of thanks; particularly as the present year, though not distinguished by any brilliant victory, was marked by *bloodless* advantages*, of no less consequence, which made a deeper breach in the iron frontier of France than any preceding campaign. The friends of the general determined to vindicate his honour from this tacit aspersion, and Lord Scarborough moved a vote of thanks in the House of Lords on the 28th of November, which was seconded by the duke of Richmond, and warmly supported by the marquess of Wharton. This proposal embarrassed the ministry, who were unwilling to acquiesce, and yet did not choose to agitate the question by open opposition. A whisper being conveyed to the duke of Devonshire, by some of the ministerial party, that it would be more properly deferred till the return of the general, the question was suffered to drop, without a debate; though some petulant objections were raised by the duke of Argyle, who was anxious to signalise his enmity to his late patron. The motion, however, was highly offensive to the new ministers, and is thus stigmatised by St. John, in the language of party rancour: "One would imagine that Lord Scarborough was hired by somebody, who wished the Duke of Marlborough ill, *to take so unconcerted and so ridiculous a measure.*"

This public slight was followed by another mortification, still more afflicting to his private feelings. The fate of the duchess of Marlborough, at this period, appears to have been a subject of the most anxious solicitude to all parties, and to none more than to him. We have already shown the impatience of the queen to give full scope to her resentment against her discarded favourite, and the spirited resolution of the duke, to make her disgrace the signal of his own immediate resignation.

Although the secret advisers of the queen had procured the dismission of Sunderland and Godolphin, and witnessed, with satisfaction and surprise, the forbearance of Marlborough, under severe and repeated trials; they yet durst not venture

* Mr. Coxe forgets that the acquisition of Aire only had cost the allies 7000 men. — Ed.

to put his patience to the final test, by suffering the queen to discharge the duchess. The cajolery of the duke of Shrewsbury was, therefore, again employed, to soothe his resentment, and induce him to retain his post, till their schemes were more fully matured, by persuading him that her dismission might be deferred till after his return, and even giving hopes that it might be prevented by his personal interference. Strange as it may seem, that a nobleman, who had been guilty of so much duplicity, could yet flatter himself that his arts would be again successful; it is still more strange to find the ex-treasurer, who had been so frequently deceived, once more caught by the obvious lure, and even prevailing on his friend, against his better judgment, to degrade himself, by replying to this insidious overture. Nothing, indeed, but the correspondence which we shall here submit to the reader, could prove such a want of spirit and foresight in a veteran statesman.

Mr. Craggs was the person through whom the suggestion was conveyed, and the result is communicated in a letter written by him to the duchess.

"*Tuesday, Aug.* 29.—Yesterday I had a letter from the duke of Shrewsbury, to meet him at his house in town, which I did accordingly. He began with telling me the great respect he had for the Duke of Marlborough, and his earnest desire to live in perfect friendship with him; that he had done to the utmost of his power to prevent several things that had happened, but was not able to prevail, and would continue to do his utmost for the future; but what effect it might have, he would not be answerable. He did confess that there were a great many things that might make the Duke of Marlborough uneasy; yet he hoped, for all that, he would have no other thoughts but that of going on, and he verily believed he would find it for his service; and though there was talk of Lord Rivers going to Hanover, to supply his place, he bid me assure the Duke of Marlborough there was no such thing, which he pretended he was not sure of till lately. He said, that a great many things might happen between this and the Duke of Marlborough's return, and then he would be a proper judge for himself; but, before that, begged that his grace would take no resolution but that of proceeding as before.

"There was something in these pretences so provoking, and particularly that of not knowing Lord Rivers's business to Hanover, that perhaps I was too much affected, and answered to the following purpose: the duke of Shrewsbury could not be insensible that the Duke of Marlborough had met with an usage to which no story could show a parallel, considering his circumstances. He answered, 'Indeed, I think so:'—that the Duke of Marlborough had given the power to the queen, by his

services, which had enabled her Majesty to do what had lately happened. He answered, 'I think there is too much truth in it, and I have done all I could to make them sensible of it.' I proceeded, that notwithstanding all these shocks, I durst say, that for the sake of his country, for his own honour, which was concerned very highly in making an end of what he had, with so much courage and conduct, pains and hazard, brought so near a most honourable and happy conclusion, (besides, he had received so many importunities from the States and the rest of his friends, and particularly since 92 and 93* here had used him so ill,) that he thought it his duty, from all these reasons, to proceed to the utmost of his power; and that there was but one thing could happen to prevent him, which was, any affront or ill usage to your grace, and, in that case, he would not be able to proceed any farther, which I believe all the world would justify him in. And that in all his answers to the States and the others, upon their importunities, he always made that exception, which they all agreed to be reasonable; and that I durst say the duke of Shrewsbury could not but think so too. To which he answered, 'It was very right, and I did think so.' And if there was no other objection, he durst say that would not be given him; for he owned, if it was, nobody could blame the Duke of Marlborough's resentment of it. After which, he made great professions of his service for your grace, that there was nobody he would be prouder to serve, for that there was nobody that had so many great and good qualities. Thus I have told you the substance of the conversation, and you will judge as well as any body, of what consequence it will be."

In communicating, however, the account of this conversation to the duchess, Mr. Craggs, from delicacy, omitted some particulars which related to the proposal of promoting a reconciliation between the queen and her, and the candid declaration of Shrewsbury, that it was impracticable. We trace this omission by a letter from Godolphin to the duke.

"*Aug.* 31. — This letter goes by Collins the messenger, with three letters, by Lady Marlborough, to go by him at the same time, which ought to make mine very short; but not knowing when I may have any other opportunity of writing so safely, I shall lay hold on this to tell you my thoughts on some points.

"Mr. Craggs has given me an account of his late conversation with the duke of Shrewsbury, and told me he had also told or written it to Lady Marlborough, all except one particular. By what I have heard since from her upon it, I find I have not exactly the same thoughts of it that her grace seems to have. Possibly if he had told that particular also to her grace, or if she could be sensible of it, as it is, there would not be so much difference in our thoughts upon this point. But be that as it will, I must own I am not altogether so sure of the duke of Shrewsbury's absolute insincerity, as many others of my acquaintance seem to be; and though I were of that mind, as well as they, yet I should still be of

* Probably Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley.

opinion that Mr. Craggs ought to carry himself so to the duke of Shrewsbury as not to let him imagine he or you think him so; and such a sort of behaviour to his grace from Mr. Craggs is, in my opinion, the surest way of preventing any farther mischief to you, till you come to England, which I take to be the chief point at present; and as far as you are of this mind or not, you will judge best what orders are proper for you to send to Mr. Craggs."

In conformity with this advice, Marlborough condescended to transmit his orders to Mr. Craggs, though in a letter to Lord Godolphin he expressed his conviction that no interposition could prevent the disgrace of his wife.

"*Sept.* 18. — I have received the favour of yours, by Collins, and I have accordingly sent directions to Mr. Craggs, to use his best endeavours, that the duke of Shrewsbury may think that I depend upon his friendship; for I agree entirely with you. I fear Lady Marlborough and some of her friends judge very wrong, when they think that the queen has any difficulty as to the parting with her, on account of her solemn promise."

What renders this conduct of the two friends more inexplicable is, that, at this very period Godolphin was convinced that Shrewsbury was active in spreading the most calumnious aspersions against the general, to whom he was making such professions of amity, as we find asserted in a previous letter.*

"The great ferment and agitation of men's minds increases every day, and the credit continues to languish very much. However, as I have told you, in all my late letters, I have no doubt but the subsistence for your army will be regularly paid, till the end of the campaign, though I think it is likely to be a long one, if this fair weather we have to-day continue, and that you go on with your project, which I very much wish, as what, in my opinion, is like to give the greatest strength to you and your friends, and to the allies in general. For, whenever the time comes that parliament assembles, the main point to be considered will be, whether the allies must be supported or deserted; and, consequently, if there be any particular situation in their affairs, of more advantage than formerly. The difficulty upon those who are of the latter opinion, will be made so much the greater by it, and render the malicious insinuations of Mr. Harley, &c. still more absurd and ridiculous; their main point being to convince parliament that you never was in earnest to conclude the war. Now, though nothing can be more notoriously false than this, yet nothing is more true than that this is their intention; and *nobody deeper in it than the duke of Shrewsbury.*"

Notwithstanding the professions of the lord chamberlain, and the opinion of Godolphin, we find Marlborough depicting

* Lord Godolphin to the duke, Sunday, Aug. 20.

to the duchess the extreme uncertainty and peril of her situation.

"*Sept.* 13. — I shall write to you to-morrow by the post, but by this opportunity of Lord Stair, I may write what I must not venture by the post. I believe you judge very right that the queen has deferred her resolution of putting you out till my return. But if there be any pretence given, they will do it before; for they are impatient of having that blow given. The queen is as desirous and as eager in this remove as Mr. Harley and Mrs. Masham can be. I do by no means approve of the behaviour of the duke of Shrewsbury in this whole matter; but remember, as Lady Peterborough used to say, that I tell you that he will be, as well as the duke of Somerset, duped; for nobody has a real power but Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley. In my opinion, all reasoning serves but to cheat ourselves; for no good judgment can be made, when one has to do with Mrs. Masham and Mr. Harley; so that the only measure in which you and I may be sure of not being deceived is, to know the truth, that whatever can be done to make us uneasy will be attempted. I am of opinion, that the king of France has taken his resolution not to think of peace till he sees, this winter, the behaviour of England. You must not flatter yourself that the elector of Hanover is capable of acting a vigorous part. I believe he will show that he esteems me; but at the same time, will be desirous of meddling as little as possible with the affairs of England, for which I cannot much blame him, for not caring to have to do with so villainous a people.

"I am still of the opinion that the only good you can do is, to be quiet, by which you will give them no handle to use you ill before my return."

It was not, indeed, without reason, that he filled his letters with these repeated admonitions, to discontinue both epistolary and personal intercourse with the queen, and to maintain a respectful silence, from a conviction that such interference would only aggravate the resentment of her Majesty, and produce the most mischievous effects. Unfortunately, his wife was not of a temper to follow his prudent advice, and her mind was continually working, how she should either persuade or frighten the queen to consent to a reconciliation.

After her imprudent importunities against the dismission of Lord Sunderland, the intercourse between them took a new turn. The queen was alarmed by her refusal to part with the confidential letters, which had passed in the long period of their intimacy, and justly dreaded, lest provocation should induce her to expose those effusions of tenderness to the public eye. The duchess, indeed, artfully wrought on the apprehensions which her equivocal answers had excited.

She wrote long narratives of their past transactions, sent copies of the queen's most confidential letters, and overwhelmed her with papers and documents, which were calculated to increase her alarms.

Sir David Hamilton, who was made the channel of these communications, was one of the royal physicians, and owed his situation to the interest of the duchess. Being a man of conciliating manners and sound sense, he acquired the confidence of the queen, and was treated with uncommon attention by Mrs. Masham. Notwithstanding his gratitude to the duchess, and his respect for the duke, it could not be expected that he should sacrifice his own interest, by offending the queen and the new favourite; but he never forgot his obligations to his former benefactress, and repeatedly gave her the most prudent and salutary advice. About the time of the dismission of Sunderland, she received from him daily intelligence of the temper of his royal mistress; and he suggested expedients, which might contribute to recover her lost influence, or at least to prevent any public mark of the queen's displeasure.

After the dismission of Godolphin, when all immediate intercourse ceased with the queen, Sir David Hamilton became the channel of a constant though indirect correspondence, in which the duchess vainly hoped to work on the feelings of her royal mistress, by recapitulating her services, and by repeatedly referring to the ill-treatment she had undergone through the influence of Mrs. Masham and Harley. These continued appeals served, however, only to irritate and render a reconciliation more impracticable; and the only reason which can be assigned for their continuance is, the mode in which the correspondence was conducted.

Copies of the letters written by the duchess to Sir David Hamilton, whom she designates under the cipher of 260, are found in great abundance among her posthumous papers, and, if published, would fill a volume. None of those written by him, excepting a short note, which will appear in a subsequent chapter, are extant; but we judge of their import by the answers and remarks of his correspondent. He evidently did not conceal his opinion, that she behaved with unbecoming violence, and in particular discouraged her design of publishing the queen's private letters. At the same

time, he seems to have acted the part of a moderator with the queen, and in particular to have represented the danger of provoking to extremity a woman of the most imperious character, who was justly entitled to complain of the falsehoods imputed to her, and the indignities heaped upon her by the agents of the ministry. Indeed, it is possible that his timely interference prevented the duchess from committing such an outrage against her royal benefactress, as exposing to the public eye the tender epistles which had been written in the height of affection; for she herself acknowledges that he prevailed on her to suspend her design till the return of the duke.*

In this predicament, the queen was reduced alternately to soothe and threaten her former favourite, and resorted to the intervention of the physician, as well as of other persons, whom she considered as likely to obtain the suppression of these documents. The duchess, however, continued firm, and the fear of driving her to extremities suspended her removal.

As a last resource, the duke of Shrewsbury was employed to discover her real intentions, and, if possible, to prevent the threatened publication. He applied to Mr. Maynwaring†, and used such arguments and insinuations as his experience in courts suggested. His efforts were not more successful than those before made, for the duchess declined parting with the letters; and, though she professed her aversion to publish such a correspondence, she adroitly threw out hints, that she might be compelled to recur to unpleasant measures, in her own justification, if the ministerial writers were suffered to continue their accusations against her, for peculation and corrupt sale of offices.

* We find the rumour of such a publication circulated at this period; and it is mentioned in a letter from Secretary St. John to Mr. Drummond, dated Nov. 28: "I had almost forgot to tell you an instance of the admirable temper in which the great man is likely, on his return, to find his wife. Among other extravagancies, she now declares she will print the queen's letters, — letters writ whilst her Majesty had a good opinion of her, and the fondness for her, which her violent behaviour since that time has absolutely eradicated." — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 27.

† She does not name Mr. Maynwaring in her narrative, but indicates him by the designation of her confidential secretary.

In this struggle between pride, interest, and fear, with the hopes of proving to the public that she was not wholly in disgrace, she wrote a letter to Sir David Hamilton, to be submitted to the queen, offering to renew her attendance, by assisting in trying on the robes which her Majesty had ordered for some public ceremony. The letter being read to the queen by her agent, she charged him to prevent the duchess from coming, though not to say that she refused to permit her attendance.

Hitherto the duchess had acted with no less indiscretion than disrespect, by shocking the political prejudices, insulting the dignity, and wounding the feelings of the queen. But at the present period she made a new and stronger appeal, which, though objectionable in the mode, was justifiable in the principle. The libellous and scurrilous productions which daily issued from the press under the auspices of the ministry, having exhausted their satire and spleen on the Duke of Marlborough, involved the duchess in accusations which affected her integrity. In one of the *Examiners*, written by Swift, Nov. 23. 1710, after a variety of insinuations against the supposed peculation and avarice of the duke, a comparison was introduced between the rewards lavished on him, and the recompence conferred on a Roman general, in which the duke's emoluments were estimated in the aggregate at the vast amount of 500,000*l.*, and those of a Roman warrior, reduced to 994*l.* 11*s.* At the end of the same paper an inuendo was introduced, by way of comparison, that the duchess, in the execution of her office during eight years, as mistress of the robes, had also purloined no less than 22,000*l.* a year.*

This slander, though couched in ambiguous terms, was too pointed in its application to be mistaken, either by the public or the party interested. The duchess, therefore, drew up an animated vindication of the duke and of herself, in a private letter to Sir David Hamilton, and sent it, with the scurrilous number, to be submitted to her Majesty. The queen read it over, and, at the conclusion, acknowledged the justice of the vindication by the brief remark, "*Every one*

* Conduct — Narratives of the Duchess, and Letters to Sir David Hamilton — Examiner, No. 16.

knows that cheating is not the duchess of Marlborough's fault."

Such was the critical situation of the duchess, when her husband was on the eve of his return to England.

CHAP. XCVIII.—DISMISSAL OF THE DUCHESS.—1711.

ON the 23d of December the Duke of Marlborough embarked in Holland, and after being driven about by contrary winds, landed on the 26th at Solebay. Having passed the night at Chelmsford, he reached London on the 28th, at five in the afternoon.

His intention was to proceed directly to St. James's, in order to pay his respects to the queen; but as he approached the skirts of the city, the populace gathered round his carriage, exclaiming, "God bless the Duke of Marlborough!" "No wooden shoes!" "No popery!" He found the streets also filled with crowds of the better sorts, and the doors and windows lined with spectators, who joined the acclamations of the people. To avoid an uproar, he went to Montagu House, and, after waiting till the tumultuous assemblage had dispersed, repaired privately, in a hackney-coach, to the palace.

His first interview with the queen was a mere audience of ceremony. Neither party being desirous of an immediate explanation, the queen turned her discourse to the weather, the roads, and other trivial objects; and the general, on his part, pleaded fatigue, to shorten the visit.

The next audience did not pass with equal reserve and apathy. The queen, to anticipate the remonstrances which she expected, observed, "I am desirous you should continue to serve me, and will answer for the conduct of all my ministers towards you." She added, with an unusual degree of decision, and even harshness, "I must request you would not suffer any vote of thanks to you to be moved in parliament this year, because my ministers will certainly oppose it." The duke received the ungracious command with calmness, and briefly terminated this unpleasant conversation by

saying, "I shall always be ready to serve your Majesty, if what has recently passed should not incapacitate me."

After this interview, all the ministers paid their official visits to the general, except Harley, who sent him a message of compliment, desiring that their first meeting might occur, as if by accident, at the council or the court; after which, he would pay him the usual visit. This arrangement accordingly took place, but with equal reserve on both sides.

Indeed, the cruel and unfeeling manner in which he was treated by his former friends and dependents would scarcely be credited, had we not the evidence of a principal actor in the scene. We deem it, therefore, necessary to quote, without any farther comment, the words of the secretary (Mr. St. John), in a confidential letter to Mr. Drummond, dated January 23. After stating that the "great man," as he invidiously calls him, had been gratified in every point which regarded him, as Duke of Marlborough, or as a general, he adds, — "He has been told by the duke of Shrewsbury, by Mr. Harley, and by your humble servant, that since the queen agrees to his commanding the army, it is our duty, and in the highest degree our interest, to support him, if possible, better than he ever yet was, and that he may depend upon this. He has seen in other instances, that we were able to see and to pursue that which was right, why should he think us capable of judging on this occasion so wrong? He was told at first that he had nothing to reproach us with; that his wife, my Lord Godolphin, and himself, had thrown the queen's favour away, and that he ought not to be angry if other people had taken it up. He was told that his true interest consisted in getting rid of his wife, who was grown to be irreconcileable with the queen, as soon as he could, and with the best grace which he could. He has been told that he must draw a line between all that has passed, and all that is to come, and that he must begin entirely upon a new foot; that if he looked back to make complaints, he would have more retorted upon him than it was possible to answer; that if he would make his former conduct the rule of his future behaviour, he would render his interests incompatible with those of the queen. What is the effect of all this plain dealing? he submits, he yields, he

promises to comply; but he struggles to alleviate Meredith's disgrace, and to make the queen make a less figure by going back, than she could have done, by taking no notice at all of the insolence of him and his comrades. He is angry at the duke of Argyle's being appointed to command in Spain, and would, I suppose, have him punished, for acting on a plan which we have all, even the queen herself, been concerned in. In short, to finish this description, I doubt he thinks it possible for him to have the same absolute power which he was once vested with, and believes, perhaps, that those who serve the queen are weak enough not to see the use that he would make of it. Once more, by all the judgment which I can form, the exterior is a little mended, but, at heart, the same sentiments remain, and these heightened and inflamed by what he calls provocations. We shall do what we can to support him in the command of the army, without betraying our mistress; and, unless he is infatuated, he will help us in this design; for you must know that the moment he leaves the service, and loses the protection of the court, *such scenes will open as no victories can varnish over.*"*

In his interview with Mr. Secretary St. John, the general was treated with much petulance and reproof, under the affectation of candour and frankness. He was compelled to listen to a political lecture on the difference between the Whigs and the Tories, and to hear the most unqualified remonstrances on the impolicy of abandoning his former friends for his recent connexions.

But the sense of all these indignities was lost in the greatest evil he had hitherto anticipated, the disgrace of his duchess. To prevent or suspend this fatal blow was the object of his most anxious solicitude. In order to ascertain the intentions of the queen, he employed the intervention of Mr. Maynwaring, whose situation as one of the auditors of the imprest, gave him frequent access to Harley. The result, however, contributed to increase his alarm, for the minister continually evaded every inquiry, by the exclamation, "that is the rock on which all will split, if care be not taken to avoid it."

In the midst of this anxiety, determined on one hand to

* Printed in the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. ii. Correspondence; and Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 77.

make her disgrace the signal of his own resignation, and importuned on the other by the entreaties of his friends, both at home and abroad, to retain his post, his mind was deeply affected with the struggle of contending passions, and his health so severely suffered, that the duchess was herself alarmed. She accordingly prevailed on him to take the earliest opportunity of ascertaining the designs of the queen, and urged him not to permit her interests to enter into competition with his own honour and the welfare of his country.

The ministers, at this juncture, were no less agitated and embarrassed than himself. They were fearful lest the threatened fate of the duchess should provoke him to carry his resolution of resigning into effect; and, at the same time, were unable to combat the violent wishes of the queen. In this predicament they again resorted to the intervention of Shrewsbury, who testified to Marlborough the deepest concern at the new mortification with which he was threatened, and indirectly recommended him to try the effect of his own personal solicitations before the key was delivered.

At the moment, when the advice gave weight to the arguments of the duchess, a note was received from Sir David Hamilton, which contained an earnest exhortation to make the attempt without delay. "I have," he wrote, "prepared the way by telling her how ill my lord duke was, how deeply grieved about the affair; that his expectation is from the queen's compassion to his duchess. I am of opinion to-day is most fitting. There seemed to be great tenderness." *

This intimation brought the affair to a crisis sooner than was expected by the duke, or even by the ministers themselves; for such was the irritation of the queen, that the slightest opposition to her will sufficed to raise her deep-rooted antipathy beyond control.

In an audience which took place on the 17th of January, Marlborough began by presenting a letter from the duchess, couched in terms of great humility.

"Though I never thought of troubling your Majesty in this manner again, yet the circumstances I see my Lord Marlborough in, and the apprehension I have that he cannot live six months, if there is not some end

* The original of this note is still preserved, and is endorsed by the duchess, "from 260," which is the cipher of Sir David Hamilton.

put to his sufferings on my account, makes it impossible for me to resist doing every thing in my power to ease him; and if I am still so unlucky as not to make use of any expressions in this letter that may move your Majesty, it is purely for want of understanding; for I really am very sorry that ever I did any thing that was uneasy to your Majesty. I am ready to promise any thing that you can think reasonable; and as I do not yet know but two things, in my whole life, that ever I did, that were disagreeable to your Majesty, I do solemnly protest that as long as I have the honour to continue your servant, I will never mention either of those subjects to you, or do any one thing that can give you the least disturbance or uneasiness. And these assurances I am desirous to give your Majesty under my hand; because I would not omit any thing possible for me to do that might save my Lord Marlborough from the greatest mortification he is capable of, and avoid the greatest mischief, in consequence of it, to your Majesty and my country.

"I am, with all the submission and respect imaginable, your Majesty's most dutiful and most obedient subject and servant,

"S. MARLBOROUGH."

The queen, coolly receiving the letter, for a considerable time refused to open it; at the importunities of the duke she at last read it, but only observed, "I cannot change my resolution." *

Marlborough then addressed her in the most moving terms, and besought her not to renounce the duchess till she had no more need of his services, which he hoped would be the case in less than a year, by the termination of the war, when both might retire together. He dwelt on all the topics likely to recover her affection toward her former favourite and her gratitude towards himself. He expatiated on the sorrow and regret of his wife for any mistakes she had ever committed, and her willingness to avoid every act or discourse which might render her Majesty uneasy for the future. He concluded with observing, "For your own sake as well as for ours, your Majesty ought not to adopt a harsher proceeding than any prince ever used towards persons of less faithful and long continued services, who had been guilty of greater faults, when pardon was requested, and a firm promise of amendment made. Still more would it reflect on your generosity to deny so trifling an indulgence to one who has been honoured by your friendship, and who has given no substantial cause for so harsh a proceeding." The queen having rejoined that her honour was interested in the removal of the

* Remarks on the letter itself, in the handwriting of the duchess.

duchess, he respectfully observed, "What this expression means I never could learn, any more than what faults she has committed." The queen, however, far from listening to his representations, peremptorily insisted that the gold key should be delivered to her within three days. On this, the duke threw himself on his knees, and, with the most moving eloquence, earnestly entreated for an interval of ten days, to concert some means of rendering the blow less mortifying and disgraceful. But he obtained no other answer than a positive repetition of the demand, limiting the term to the shorter space of two days.

Finding the queen inexorable, he rose, and, turning the conversation, adverted to the mortification which he had experienced by the dismission of the three officers for drinking his health. But this topic was no less galling than the preceding, and she abruptly broke off the conversation by exclaiming, "I will talk of no other business till I have the key." He still lingered, though the audience had already lasted an hour; but finding no prospect of softening his royal mistress, he took his leave with the deepest emotions of indignation and sorrow.*

The duchess now saw that there was no hope of reconciliation, and felt the necessity of acting with a dignity becoming her spirit and character. As the duke still expressed a resolution of resigning his command, that it might not appear to arise from the insult offered to herself, she adopted the determination of relinquishing her office without a moment's delay; she accordingly combated his purpose, and

* It is singular that both Whig and Tory writers of this period, and subsequent times, as well as the duchess herself in her "Conduct," have given no details of this interesting audience. Possibly one party was restrained by regret that Marlborough should have submitted to such degrading solicitations without success; and the other by shame for such unworthy treatment of a general to whom the crown, as well as the ministers themselves, were so deeply indebted. Indeed, considering the manner in which the duchess has passed over the transaction in her printed "Conduct," we were surprised to find such details extant, even among her papers. Possibly she yielded to the suggestions of her friends in suppressing the narrative for the moment, in the hope that these memorials might be employed at a subsequent time in that historical monument which she appears to have been so anxious to consecrate to the memory of her husband.

prevailed on him to repair, the same evening, to the royal presence, and deliver up the key. On this occasion he repeated his solicitations to know the offence of which the duchess had been guilty; but, whether confused at his unexpected appearance, or affected with a sense of her own ingratitude, the queen neither maintained her former reserve nor explained herself with dignity and precision, but, in faltering accents, gave an unintelligible and incoherent reply.*

It may seem extraordinary that Marlborough, on this occasion, did not immediately execute his declared purpose of resigning. This, doubtless, would have been the case had he been left to the impulse of his own will. But he was again assailed by Godolphin and the Whigs at home, and by his friends abroad, particularly Eugene† and the pensionary, who concurred in urging that his retreat would dissolve the grand alliance and ruin the common cause; and that he ought to sacrifice all private feelings and party principles for the sake of completing the great work which he had begun, and of giving to Europe a solid and lasting peace.

In an evil hour he yielded to these representations, and continued in the command only to encounter the disgrace and persecution with which he had been threatened, and to lament the conclusion of that dishonourable peace which he so much deprecated. Though without confidence in the ministers, he concerted measures with them for the future campaign, although every day was marked with new insults from the queen and parliament.

* The particulars of these interesting audiences are drawn from various narratives written by the duchess, some under the impulse of the moment, and others preparatory to her Vindication. [There may be difference of opinion about the *prudence* of the above disclosures, but there can be none on the high testimony they afford to the industry of Archdeacon Coxe and the faithfulness of his narrative. Unswayed by the example of preceding writers, and his own admiration of the general character of Marlborough, he has practised no concealment in the exhibition of the humiliation of his hero. The queen had doubtless received great provocation from the duchess; but her conduct was not wholly blameless, and the queen's demeanour towards her intended victim showed that Anne was no inapt scholar under such consummate masters of the art of dissimulation as Shrewsbury, Harley, and St. John. — Ed.]

† In one of her narratives the duchess asserts that the exhortations of Eugene had the greatest effect in inducing her husband to retain the command.

The duchess being thus disgraced, her object was to clear herself from the three great imputations with which she was charged by the solemn sanction of the queen herself. In order to obtain this sanction, she availed herself of the opportunity, when she delivered in her accounts, not only to recall to the mind of her royal mistress the offer of the pension of 2000*l.* for which she had never drawn, but carried the whole amount of the arrears, for nine years, to her credit, accompanied with a copy of the queen's letter making the offer.* In justice to her memory we describe this transaction in her own words: —

"Some of my friends persuaded me to let the queen be asked whether she would not allow me to take out of the privy purse the two thousand pounds a year which she had so often pressed me to accept, since the reason of my refusing it now ceased, when she had turned me out of my places. I must confess it went very much against me to desire any thing of her; but when I considered how great a sum of money I had saved her by the management of my offices, the real services I had done her in many respects, and the dear hours of my life I had passed in her service for many years together, without either asking or having any thing of her (except those few trifles I mentioned before), after she came to the crown, which any one will think was the proper time for her to have rewarded her old servants, I thought I should not be in her debt, though she had given me what I had so often refused; and, therefore, that I might very well suffer myself to be governed by my friends in letting her be asked about this matter. Accordingly, I consented that a copy of one of her own letters, in which she pressed me so much to take that money out of the privy purse, should be shown to her, and that the person that carried it should tell her that I desired to know, before I made up my accounts, whether she still was willing that I should take the money out of the privy purse, as she had desired me in that letter. When this was proposed to her, she blushed and appeared to be very uneasy, and not disposed to allow of my putting that money into my accounts; but for want of good counsel or instructions to defend herself in refusing that which she had been so very earnest with me to accept before, she consented that I should do it. Then I sent in my accounts, with that yearly sum charged in them from the time she had offered it to me. But I still used this further caution of writing at the bottom of the accounts, before I charged the last sum, a copy of the letter I mentioned before, that, when she signed them, she might at the same time attest her own letter, and the offer she had made me of her own accord, and pressed me to take in this manner: — '*Pray make no more words about it, and either own or conceal it, as you like best, since I think the richest crown could never repay the services I have received from you.*' After this, the queen kept my accounts almost a fortnight by

* This letter is printed in chap. 14.

her, in which time I don't doubt but they were well examined by Abigail and Mr. Harley; but there was no fault which they could pretend to find with them, and they were sent back to me without the least objection being made against them, signed by the queen's own hand, who had writ under them that she allowed of them, and was satisfied that they were right. So that the new ministers had nothing left 'em in this matter but to whisper about the town some scandalous stories of it, and to employ such of their agents as the 'Examiner' in propagating them."*

The queen did not long delay the disposal of the places held by the Duchess of Marlborough. The principal office of groom of the stole, or lady of the wardrobe, was conferred on the duchess of Somerset, and the confidential situation of keeper of the privy purse was transferred to Mrs. Masham.

The natural consequence of her removal from the household was, the relinquishment of her apartments in the palace. On this occasion, we regret to record that she acted with no less petulance than want of dignity. She ordered the locks, placed on the doors at her expense, to be taken off, and the marble chimney-pieces to be removed. This proof of petty and disrespectful resentment deeply affected the duke, who was then abroad; and, in a letter, in which he reproves the freedom of her pen towards the new ministers, we find him touching with proper dignity on this delicate subject.

"*May* 24. — We received yesterday four packets at once; three of yours were from St. Alban's: the last, of the 28th, speaks so freely of Mr. Harley, that I am sorry to see that you have already forgot the earnest request made by me in my letter to Lord Townshend. The prints being governed by Mr. St. John and Mr. Harley, they must be disagreeable as long as these two see† and hear what you speak and write.

"I am sent word the queen is desirous of having the lodgings at St. James's, so that I desire you would give directions for the removing of the furniture, as the queen intends to join some part of them to her own lodgings. I beg you will not remove any of the marble chimney-pieces. As to Mrs. Cooper's lodgings, which is in the grant of the house, I think you will do well to inform Mr. Craggs of it, that he might acquaint the duke of Shrewsbury, so that the queen might give her directions for the providing for her out of one part of our lodgings.

"The rainy weather is returned, which makes my head uneasy, but I have no doubt of having strength and health to finish this campaign, and

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* From a letter of the duchess to Mr. Hutchinson.

† By access to the Post-office, and opening the letters of the duchess, addressed to the duke. — Ed.

I hope by that time the French may be desirous of peace, which is most earnestly wished by your humble servant."

This exhortation appears to have produced its effect; but the orders of the duchess, which could not be concealed, excited the indignation of the queen.* A letter from Mr. Maynwaring details a conversation with Mr. Harley, which shows the deep impression the incident produced at court.

"285† was two hours with Mr. Harley, who began to tell me how concerned he was that the queen would do nothing towards the building at Woodstock. I said I was in hopes that matter had been over, having heard so much of it. Mr. Harley answered, 'So it was, till the late bustle about the lodgings.' 'What was that, pray?' said I. 'Come, come,' replied he, 'you must have heard what the duchess has done, and the message sent by Mrs. Cooper.' In short, the queen is so angry, that she says she will build no house for the Duke of Marlborough, when the duchess has pulled hers to pieces, taken away the very slabs out of the chimneys, thrown away the keys, and said they might buy more for ten shillings, with a great deal such stuff, too impertinent to mention; but this is made the pretence for what those lying wretches never designed to do, and 285 was desired to acquaint the Duke of Marlborough with it, and assure you that Mr. Harley would get it over as soon as he could; but that as yet the queen was inexorable.

"After this, Mr. Harley run over all that had happened since he was out, and before, professed how well he could live with the Duke of Marlborough, wished to hear of some good success, which he said would set all right. 285 represented the difficulties the duke was under, but that signified nothing; then I complained of the libels that came out. Mr. Harley said, the Duke of Marlborough must not mind them, that he himself was called rogue every day in print, and knew the man that did it, meaning, I doubt, 78 (me), yet he should live fairly with him. But now they have made it impossible for any thing to be done; they

* Among the papers of the duchess, we find a curious memorandum on the state of the fixtures in these lodgings, which appears to have been drawn up by some person who was appointed to take possession of them after the removal of the duchess.

"*July* 21. 1711. — At the request, and for the vindication of the Duke of Marlborough's servants, I do acknowledge to have found those lodgings, formerly called the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough's lodgings, in the condition as follows: All the furniture removed out of the kitchen and cellar, except the stoves; all brass locks removed, &c. except those to the outward doors; all the looking glass removed; but all the chimney-pieces and slabs, wainscot, windows, and floors, were left in the same condition they were in, when my lord duke and my lady duchess lived in the lodgings."

† This cipher is probably a mistake for 78, or a double cipher for Mr. Maynwaring.

grow strangely impatient for action, and their whole business, from henceforward will be, to blast the Duke of Marlborough's character, and to set him down.

"But nothing is more malicious, nor more villainously meant, than this turn about Blenheim, to make the Duke of Marlborough believe that your grace is the cause of that not being done, which, of all things, he desired to have done. Pray give me the satisfaction to know if any body else has spoken of this to you; if not, it should not be mentioned; for then people will leave off telling me what they would not have you know. Here are four pretenders to be Scotch secretaries, so that some think none of them will be so."*

CHAP. XCIX. — DECLINE OF THE DUKE. — 1711.

HITHERTO the anxious mind of Marlborough had been sustained by the cheering support of the national voice, and the tribute of approbation, which even his political enemies paid to his meritorious services. But at this period of anguish and disappointment, he had to deplore a fatal change in public opinion, which was wrought by the persevering efforts of a host of libellers, who spared no calumny to asperse his character or decry his merits.

Confident in their integrity, not sufficiently imbued with a taste for literature, nor duly estimating the influence which the press had recently acquired over the public mind, both Marlborough and Godolphin had paid too little attention to that crowd of writers, who began to give a new impulse to the national sentiment. Marlborough had, indeed, extended

* On the vacancy from the death of the duke of Queensbury.—[This has certainly not been the least interesting chapter of the *Memoirs*. It offers the finest illustration of the littleness of the great in history. The hero of Blenheim on his knees, and not only his ignoble suit rejected, but the three days previously allowed for the return of the key peremptorily reduced to two. At this period the name of Marlborough was the most distinguished in Europe; but his inordinate love of power made him dim the lustre of his renown. It is to be regretted that there are any traits in so illustrious a character that should recall Pope's pregnant epigraph on Bacon, as the "greatest and meanest of mankind." The haughty duchess, too, showed herself not less odious in her condescensions, to call up the arrears of the pension, which she had at first declined to accept. — ED.]

his patronage to Prior and Addison; but Godolphin, cold, reserved, and silent by nature, and economical in the disposal of public money, had treated the influence of the press with contempt, and particularly repulsed both Swift and Prior, the first, a giant in political controversy; and the second, writing with a knowledge of public business, the acquisitions of a scholar, and the genius of a poet.

On the contrary, Harley and St. John being eminent scholars themselves, had from taste as well as discernment, learned to estimate the force of this great engine of policy. Hence, by affability and munificence, they soon found means to interest the ablest writers in their cause, and, in particular, gained by their confidence and friendship, Swift and Prior, who were deeply offended by the ill-judged economy, and repulsive demeanour of Godolphin. No one suffered more, nor with less justice, from this imprudent confidence of his colleague, than Marlborough; for he was assailed with all the powers of wit and humour, whetted by personal rancour. Among other political effusions of the time, none produced a greater effect than the Examiner, which was started by Prior, supported by Swift, and in which St. John himself occasionally condescended to display his brilliancy of talent, and that sophistry of which he was a perfect master. The literary adherents of the ex-ministry, indeed, rallied in their defence; and Maynwaring, Hare, Steele, and Oldmixon, aimed against these powerful antagonists their puny weapons, which fell like the spear darted by the feeble hand of Priam against the shield of Pyrrhus.* Such combatants, though armed with truth and justice, were overwhelmed with the keen wit of Prior and St. John; with the caustic humour, and inimitable irony of Swift, clothed in a style and language which were calculated to take the deepest hold on the public mind. The consequence was, a rapid increase of that prejudice, which had been excited against the general, and a contempt of those victories, which had before been hailed with universal enthusiasm.

* Sic fatus senior, telumque imbelle sine ictu
Conjecit: rauco quod protinus ære repulsum.
Et summo clypei nequaquam umbone pependit.
Æneid, lib. ii. v. 544.

Such, indeed, was the effect of an engine, whose powers had not then been duly appreciated, as to excite the indignant surprise of Smollet, himself decidedly hostile to the Whig administration, and to the fame of our illustrious commander. "Marlborough," he says, "who, but a few months before, had been so highly extolled and caressed by the representatives of the people, was now become the object of parliamentary hatred and censure, though no sensible alteration had happened in his conduct or success. That hero, who had retrieved the glory of the British arms, won so many battles, subdued such a number of towns and districts, humbled the pride, and checked the ambition of France, secured the liberty of Europe, and, as it were, chained victory to his chariot wheels, was, in a few weeks, dwindled into an object of contempt and derision. He was ridiculed in public libels, and reviled in private conversation. Instances were every where repeated of his fraud, avarice, and extortion; of his insolence, cruelty, ambition, and misconduct. Even his courage was called in question; and this consummate general was represented as the lowest of mankind."

In the midst of this literary warfare, and the fatal wounds which it inflicted on the reputation of Marlborough, the parliamentary proceedings were conducted with a spirit of hostility and vengeance, equally inveterate and unparalleled.

Not content with withholding that tribute of public thanks, which was so justly due, his enemies indulged themselves in indirect censures on his conduct, as well as on that of his former colleagues. They dwelt on the disasters of the war in Spain, and conveyed an invidious reflection on his past successes, by bestowing on the wild and chivalrous enterprises of Lord Peterborough, that approbation which they had denied to the judicious and glorious achievements of a commander, whom even his enemies considered as the pride of his country.

After acquainting the house with the recent reverses in Spain, and with her directions for procuring troops to repair the losses sustained by the British forces, the queen expressed her hopes, that her conduct would obtain the concurrence and approbation of parliament. Both houses were happy to have this opportunity of accusing the late ministry

and insulting the general. With this view, they instituted an inquiry; but, instead of confining themselves to the recent disasters in the Peninsula, they extended it retrospectively to the military operations which preceded the fatal battle of Almanza. In returning their thanks to the queen, the peers, in particular, requested her Majesty to delay for a few days the departure of Lord Peterborough, on his mission to Vienna, for the purpose of being examined before a committee, appointed to make the inquiry into the causes of these reverses.

In the course of this investigation, questions were put to Lord Peterborough for the purpose of displaying his merits. He quoted his replies from the Apology for his Conduct, written by Dr. Freind, under his own direction, in which he criminated Lord Galway for his advice in the council of war at Valencia, to prosecute offensive hostilities, and imputed to that advice the defeat at Almanza, and the subsequent disasters in Spain. In consequence of these charges, Galway was summoned and examined; and, after a justificatory recapitulation of his conduct, was permitted to withdraw. After Godolphin, Wharton, and Halifax had spoken in his favour, the Duke of Marlborough observed, with great feeling, "It was somewhat strange that generals, who had acted to the best of their understanding, and had lost their limbs in the service, should be examined, like offenders, about insignificant things; and he could not imagine the meaning of such proceedings, nor where they would stop." This observation making no impression, the inquiry was continued; and the question on the comparative merits and conduct of Peterborough and Galway, which had wearied the public attention in 1707, was revived, and gave rise to the most animated and violent debates. Galway, as being devoted to the Whigs, and protected by Marlborough, was bitterly reproached by the Tories; while Peterborough, who had deserted to the Tories, and marshalled himself with the foes of his former patron, received the unqualified support of the ministerial majority.

Elated by this triumph, the victorious party next endeavoured to represent the misconduct of the war in Spain, as the principal cause which occasioned the failure of the expedition against Toulon.

In the debate which arose on this subject, Peterborough declared that the duke of Savoy insisted so firmly on a defensive war in Spain, that he desired to have 5000 men from the army in that country. Marlborough however positively contradicted this assertion, and observed:—

"My lords, I had the honour of the queen's commands to treat with the duke of Savoy, about an attempt upon Toulon, which her Majesty, from the beginning of this war, had looked upon as one of the most effectual means to finish it. And I can assure you, that in the whole negotiation with his royal highness's ministers, one of whom, Count Briançon, is dead, the other, Count Maffei, is now here, not one word was spoken of Spain, where the war was to be managed upon its own bottom, as well as that of Italy, and both independently upon one another. As for the war in Spain, it was the general opinion of England, that it should be offensive; and as to my Lord Peterborough's projects, I can assure your lordships, that one of the greatest instances that Holland and the duke of Savoy made, was, that the emperor and we should not insist upon an expedition to Naples, which might hinder the other design.

"My lords, my intentions were always honest and sincere, to contribute all that lay in my power to bring this heavy and expensive war to an end. God Almighty has blessed my endeavours with success; but if men are to be censured, when they give their opinions to the best of their understandings, I must expect to be found fault with as well as the rest.

"My Lord Galway and every body in Spain have done their duty; and though I must own that lord has been unhappy, and that he had no positive orders for a battle, yet I must do him the justice to say, that the whole council of war were of his opinion, to fight the enemy before the coming up of the duke of Orleans, with a reinforcement of 9 or 10,000 men.

"On the other hand, I confess I do not understand how the separation of the army would have favoured the siege of Toulon."

Peterborough stating, in explanation, that "there was a necessity of going to Madrid," the duke resumed, "I will not contradict that noble lord, as to the situation of the

country; but the situation of the army could not be preparatory to a defensive, but to an offensive war, which, in my opinion, was the best way to make a diversion, and thereby hinder the French from relieving Toulon. But after all, that unhappy battle had no other effect than to reduce us to the defensive; for the French troops that were detached from Spain, never came before Toulon."

Notwithstanding this explicit declaration, and other arguments of equal force advanced by him and his colleagues, and but feebly opposed by the Tories, the question was carried, "that the late ministers were justly to be blamed, for contributing to all our disasters in Spain, and the consequent disappointment of the expedition against Toulon, by carrying on an offensive war in Spain." It concluded, "that the earl of Peterborough performed many great and eminent services; and had his opinion in the council of war at Valencia been followed, it might very probably have prevented the subsequent misfortunes."

Against this vote, a protest was entered, with the signatures of no less than six-and-thirty peers.

After these proceedings, the thanks of the house, on a motion of the duke of Buckingham, were voted to Lord Peterborough, for his remarkable and eminent services. The lord keeper Harcourt, in conveying this congratulation, introduced into his address a malignant aspersion on the Duke of Marlborough, by extolling the magnanimity of Peterborough in preferring to accept this honour *unalloyed by any other reward.* After this deliberate and ungracious, though indirect stigma, upon the great commander, he added, in a disgusting strain of more than Spanish hyperbole, "had more days been allowed me than I have had minutes, to call to mind the wonderful and amazing success, which perpetually attended your lordship in Spain (the effect of your lordship's personal bravery and conduct), I would not attempt the enumerating your particular services; since I should offend your lordship, by the mention of such as I could recollect, and give a just occasion of offence to this honourable house, by my involuntary omission of the far greater part of them. Had your lordship's wise counsels, particularly your advice at the council of war in Valencia, been pursued in the following campaign, the fatal battle of

Almanza, and our greatest misfortunes, which have since happened in Spain, had been prevented, and the design upon Toulon might have happily succeeded."

The peers subsequently exposed their partiality, by censuring Lord Galway for giving precedence to the Portuguese troops, and still more degraded their dignity, by condemning a reply to Dr. Freind's Account of Peterborough's Conduct, and by ordering the author and printer to be taken into custody. They closed their proceedings on Spanish affairs, with an address to the queen, in which they recapitulated their votes and resolutions declaratory of Lord Peterborough's services, and Lord Galway's misconduct. They also laid before her Majesty a report of the committee appointed to inquire into the deficiency of the forces in Spain, and proposed a remedy.*

In the midst of these stormy debates, the Commons voted considerable supplies for the service of the year, amounting to more than 6,000,000*l.*; and the most solemn promises were conveyed to the commander-in-chief, that all requisites for the pay of the army, and other military services, should be punctually furnished.

When we consider the insolence with which Marlborough was treated by the Tory leaders, and the abuse heaped upon him by their subaltern dependents in the ministerial publications of the day, we may judge of the little cordiality which existed on either side. We may estimate the mortification which he must have felt for his ill-requited services, in continuing in a command, where he must have been aware that he was placed only to be dishonoured and disappointed, and to see his efforts marred, by the clandestine intrigues of the new ministry with the French court. Pressed, however, on all hands, by the emperor, the duke of Savoy, the elector of Hanover, and the States, as well as by the friendly exhortations of Eugene, the Whigs, and Godolphin, he reluctantly consented to retain a post, where he had little to hope, and all to fear. In the anguish of his mind, he confessed to Bishop Burnet, that his wishes to resign had been overruled by these concurrent representations, and that he sacrificed himself for the sake of the common cause.

* Journals — Chandler's Debates of the House of Lords — Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne, p. 185. — Tindal, vol. xvii. p. 342–347.

It must, indeed, have been a sacrifice of no ordinary kind, for a man of his magnanimity to receive cold, ceremonious, and often reproachful audiences of the queen, to be reduced to listen to the taunts of his former dependents, and to be lectured on his military conduct by Harley and St. John. Much more irksome must it have been, to concert the details of the future campaign with ministers who, while they mocked him with professions of their zealous support, were making secret overtures of accommodation to the enemy. Compelled, however, to wear the aspect of confidence and cordiality, where he suspected deception; and to assume the appearance of tranquillity, where he was hourly exposed to reproach, insult, and petulance, he bore these outrages with more calmness than seemed congenial with his sensitive mind; and this victory over his passions is no less honourable to his character, than the brightest of his triumphs over the public enemy.

It is no wonder that he was anxious to remove from this scene of mortification; and notwithstanding the discouraging auspices under which he prepared for his journey, that he was eager to return to the army, where, if not shielded from the insults of his political enemies, he was at least farther removed from the sphere of their influence.

At the moment of his departure, and soon after his arrival in Holland, he was doomed to witness new proofs of the hostility with which, in the persons of his friends, he was persecuted by the agents of government. Cadogan, whose military as well as political talents were of the highest order, who had won his confidence by his services, and had essentially contributed to some of his most brilliant successes, was removed from the post of envoy to the States, and replaced, first by Mr. Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham, and afterwards by Lord Orrery, with whom he had particular reason to be dissatisfied. Lord Townshend, also, whose integrity, abilities, and zeal were peculiarly acceptable, was superseded in the office of plenipotentiary at the Hague, by Lord Raby, whose violence and indiscretion Marlborough had long lamented, and whose captious spirit had been to him a perpetual source of disquietude.

CHAP. C.—NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE.—1711.

NOTWITHSTANDING these multiplied causes of disgust and disquietude, Marlborough took leave of the queen, with every testimony of respect and duty, and of the ministers with every external mark of courtesy and complacency. He reached the Hague on the 4th of March, and presented to the States a letter from the queen, in which she renewed her former professions of confidence in his zeal and services, and expressed her resolution to promote the interest of the common cause.

He was, however, now placed in a situation far different from that in which he had appeared on preceding occasions. Hitherto he was the organ of government, and one of the plenipotentiaries, to whom were confided the secrets of the negotiation; and was considered as the prime mover of the political machine. But at this time, he came only to exhibit a phantom of his former authority, and was officially excluded even from the slightest glimpse of that clandestine intercourse, which was passing between England and France; though he could not be unacquainted with the general tendency of such dishonourable dealings.

We have already hinted at the overtures of Louis to the secret counsellers of the queen, even before they had been introduced into administration. The first advances were made in July, through the channel of Gualtier, an obscure priest, who had formerly been chaplain to Marshal Tallard, when French ambassador in London, and who, after his departure, had officiated in the chapel of the imperial minister. He privately made oral communications to the earl of Jersey, whose wife was a Roman Catholic, and who was himself strongly attached to the Tory interest. Harley and his cabal were, however, too prudent to give any answer to these proposals, until they were firmly established in office; but, in December, they acknowledged the overtures from the French court, and, through the means of Gualtier, clandestinely established a regular intercourse with the minister of Louis. Thus cut off from all share in political transactions, Marlborough did not suffer his disgust to damp his zeal; but

laboured more earnestly to complete the military plans, which he had already concerted with Eugene.

During the winter, the greatest exertions had been made for the ensuing campaign, and the British ministers, in particular, had not spared the most vigorous efforts. In Spain, the allied forces had been considerably augmented; large supplies voted for this special service; and the duke of Argyle appointed to the command, instead of General Stanhope, who was still detained a prisoner. It was therefore expected that the troops in Catalonia would be able to maintain a defensive position, while the grand exertion was made on the side of the Netherlands.

The fortunate circumstances which had occurred in other quarters, justified a hope of the most auspicious result. By the pressing instances of the Maritime Powers, the courts of Vienna and Turin had been reconciled; the duke of Savoy, gratified by the concessions of the emperor, agreed to resume the command; and a powerful army was to assemble in Piémont early in the spring, for the purpose of penetrating into Dauphiné, and accomplishing the design which had been frustrated in the preceding year.

The emperor found greater facility than hitherto in co-operating on the side of the Rhine, and in the Netherlands. Having appeased the troubles in Hungary, by the pacification of Zatmar, he was enabled to transfer great part of the forces, which had been employed against the insurgents, to a more important field of action. Eugene was preparing to join his illustrious colleague in the Netherlands, with a considerable accession of strength; and, if England continued steady to her engagements, the two great commanders hoped, by a well-concerted and splendid achievement, to conquer the monarchy of Spain in the heart of France.

The French monarch saw the storm gathering round his frontier with anxiety, but with unshaken firmness. Although his kingdom was exhausted by the protracted duration of a ruinous war, he found new resources in the loyalty of his subjects, and obtained recruits for his armies, and contributions for his immense expenditure. He was also well aware, that if he could continue the contest for another year, and prevent any fatal defeat, by remaining on the defensive, he should wean England from the grand alliance. By that

fortunate event, he hoped to effect, what had long been the object of his anxious wishes, a division among the confederates, and to obtain terms of peace less revolting to his feelings, more consonant to his dignity, and more advantageous to his family and subjects, than had been hitherto proposed by their united counsels. After making the necessary efforts for continuing the contest in Spain, in Dauphiné, and on the Rhine, he directed, as before, his principal attention to that frontier, which was menaced with the most imminent danger.

While Marlborough was maturing his military arrangements, a series of events occurred, which contributed no less to damp his hopes, than to encourage the enemy.

The new ministry had fully succeeded in their views: they had excluded their political opponents from all share in the government, and degraded every act of their glorious administration; they had inflicted the deepest wounds on the feelings of Marlborough, vilified his reputation, debased his character, and rendered him the object of public execration. But like other victorious parties, they were not long allowed to exult in their success. A schism was already begun, and a new opposition reared its head against Harley and his partisans, composed of the violent Tories and Jacobites, under the guidance of Rochester. To give union and efficiency to their efforts, a powerful combination was formed, under the name of the October Club, which consisted of 130 members, of whom the majority were Jacobites, and formed a body capable of embarrassing, if not controlling, the deliberations of the legislature. At this period, Swift justly observed, in his emphatical language, "The kingdom is as certainly ruined as much as bankrupt merchants. We must have peace, let it be a bad or good one, though nobody dare talk of it. The nearer I look upon things, the worse I like them; the confederacy will soon break to pieces, and our factions at home increase; the ministry are upon a narrow bottom, and stand like an isthmus, between the Whigs on one side, and the violent Tories on the other. They are able seamen, but the tempest is too great."*

Not only Harley and St. John were alarmed at their critical situation, but even the queen began to dread, lest the throne should be shaken, in the conflict of contending factions. In

* Journal to Stella, March 4. 1710–11.

this predicament, therefore, both the sovereign and her ministers affected to court the countenance of those whom they had so recently mortified and disgraced. The queen invited Lord Somers to long and confidential audiences, and showed him such marked attention, as induced Swift, and other dependents of the ministry, to suspect that the Whigs, aided by the duchess of Somerset, were playing the same game against them, as they themselves had played against the Whigs, through the agency of Mrs. Masham. From the same motive also, we discover a striking change in the conduct of Harley and St. John towards Marlborough. Even their political organ, Swift, who had before loaded him with every species of obloquy and calumny, introduced his name into one of the Examiners, in a style of the highest encomium, and indirectly invited him to coalesce with the Tories. "Nobody that I know of did ever dispute the Duke of Marlborough's courage, conduct, or success; they have always been unquestionable, and will continue to be so, in spite of the malice of his enemies, or what is yet more, the *weakness of his advocates.* The nation only wishes to see him taken out of *ill* hands, and put into *better.*"*

The two ministers also repeatedly conferred with the friends of the general, who yet remained in office; in particular, they occasionally consulted with Craggs and Bridges, on the means of effecting a reconciliation, and, in their correspondence, descended to the same fulsome professions, which they had employed while they were merely humble dependents. A single extract from a letter of Mr. St. John to the Duke of Marlborough will suffice to display the symptoms of this revolution in their sentiments.

"*March* 27. — Your grace's letter of the 21st of this month, N. S., together with the postscript written after you had seen Mr. Lumley, I read to the queen, and it is a great pleasure to me to tell your grace that I never saw her majesty better pleased on any occasion. She commanded me to let your grace know that nothing but her illness had hindered her from writing to you; that now she is better you shall very soon hear from her; that she is obliged to you for your concern for her health, and that she desires to be kindly remembered to you.

"Your grace, my lord, has fully answered all the queen's intentions relating to the five regiments, by the orders you have been pleased to

* Examiner, No. 28. Feb. 15. 1710–11.

give; and I hope they are, by this time, embarking at Ostend, the convoy being gone with a fair wind and mild weather.

"Your grace may be assured of my sincere endeavours to serve you *and I hope never to see again the time when I shall be obliged to embark in a separate interest from you.* Craggs dined with me to-day: we were some time alone; and he will inform you how easy we think it is to restore, and confirm, that confidence which is to be desired, among people who can, and who, for the public good, should give the law. I dare say, and will answer, that your grace will do your part for the good of the ministry, and of the credit.

"Mr. Lumley will have been able to tell your grace how sincerely I wish you established on that bottom, which alone suits the merit and the character of a man like you. I do not believe here is any inclination wanting in the persons mentioned by your grace, and confidence will soon be restored." *

Marlborough received these professions from the secretary, and similar overtures from Harley, with no less appearance of cordiality, though he was too discerning to give implicit credit to language, which he knew to arise from fear, not inclination. He was, indeed, deeply anxious not to offend those whose hostilities he had experienced, and the effects of whose enmity he had ample cause to dread. In a letter to the duchess, he at once explains the motives of his conduct, and deprecates that violence in which she was too prone to indulge herself, against those who had robbed her of the royal favour.

"*Hague, April* 16. — The reason of my desiring you not to name any of the ministers in any of your letters, is, from the certain assurances I have of their opening all the letters which come to me. I know you are very indifferent as to their opinion of yourself; but the concern you have for me must in kindness oblige you never to say any thing of them which may give offence; since whilst I am in the service I am in their power, especially by the villanous way of printing, which stabs me to the heart; so that I beg of you, as for the quiet of my life, that you will be careful never to write any thing that may anger them; and for your own satisfaction, be assured that I know them so perfectly well that I shall always be upon my guard. But whilst I serve I must endeavour not to displease; for they have it so much in their power to vex me, that I must beg you will, for my sake, be careful in your discourse, as well as in your letters. Be assured that I am very sensible that I can have no true happiness till I am out of all business, and that I might have the remainder of my life quiet, would endeavour to retain the good liking of every body, which I hope may be compassed, if we could have a tolerable peace. As I love you with all my heart and soul, and could venture my life to

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 128.

give you ease, I hope what I so earnestly desire for my own quiet may not be uneasy to you. My thoughts are, that you and I should endeavour all we can not to have enemies; for if we flatter ourselves with the having many friends, it is not to be expected, when favour is lost, as ours is entirely. I am desirous you would not communicate this letter to any body but to Lord Godolphin.

"Our affairs abroad are in so bad a condition that I almost despair of having any good success this summer; so that I fear I shall have no other prospect but that of torment and vexation. But what may happen, or become of me, may God Almighty bless you, and make you happy, as much as may be possible in this world."

At the very moment, however, when Harley and St. John were thus courting the great general, whom they had so deeply injured, they suffered the same malicious attacks to be carried on against his character, and the financial administration of Godolphin, either from inability to restrain the zeal of their violent partisans, or from a wish to raise their own reputation on the ruins of that of their predecessors.

Committees of inquiry had been appointed by the Commons, at the commencement of the session, to examine and state the debts of the nation, and scrutinise the management of the revenue. In the course of this inquiry no effort was spared to work on the public feelings; the most flagrant abuses were charged on the late administration; and the national debts were exaggerated in the highest degree; that of the navy alone being represented as amounting to the enormous sum of 5,130,529*l.* It was even industriously whispered, that the whole national obligations, when exhibited, would exceed all calculation and conjecture.

It was not deemed sufficient to work on the public apprehensions alone; but when the rumours to which this inquiry gave birth had produced their effect the prospect of a remedy was held forth, and hints were mysteriously given of a grand scheme devised by the new minister of finance, which was to discharge these enormous obligations, to remedy the flagrant misconduct of his predecessors, and to place the national credit on a stable and efficient basis.

Notwithstanding all these artifices, the credit of Harley and St. John continued to decline, and it was daily more dubious whether even the favour and confidence of the sovereign would enable them to maintain their ground, without coalescing with the Whigs, or assimilating with their covert

antagonists of the October Club. The credit of Harley was, however, saved by an unexpected incident, which revived his declining popularity, and rendered him once more the object of general interest.

The reader will recollect the marquis of Guiscard, who made a prominent figure in the attempts for exciting insurrections in the interior of France. For some time the powerful recommendations of the duke of Savoy and of Eugene, and the interest of St. John, who had been the companion of his pleasures, joined to unusual brilliancy of parts, a spirit of enterprise, and fascinating manners, induced Marlborough to treat him with peculiar attention, and to employ him in various projects and expeditions. But the fallacy and extravagance of his schemes, his incessant importunity and abundant self-conceit, at length wearied the British general; and, in a letter to Godolphin, he desires to be troubled no longer with the endless projects and memorials of one whom he considered either as an enthusiast or a madman. Soon afterwards he had reason even to doubt his fidelity, and imparted to the queen and Godolphin suspicions that he was engaged in a treacherous correspondence with the ministers of his former sovereign. From compassion, or want of proof, Guiscard was not wholly discarded; and when the regiment of which he had been colonel was broken, after the battle of Almanza, he, by dint of importunity, aided by the influence of his friend St. John, procured a pension of 500*l.* a year. This pension being reduced by Harley to 400*l.*, and all his attempts to obtain employment repelled, he made overtures to the French government, and offered to purchase his pardon, by betraying the secrets of those by whom he had been trusted. His machinations being detected by Harley, he was arrested for high treason, under a warrant from Secretary St. John.

On the 8th of March, Guiscard was brought to the cockpit, to undergo the usual examination before the great officers of state. He at first firmly denied his guilt, but was confounded by the production of one of his own intercepted letters, and an order was made to convey him to Newgate. Roused to fury by this discovery, he resisted the messenger to whose custody he was delivered, and rushed forward, with the apparent intention of stabbing Secretary St. John with a

penknife, which he had contrived to secrete. Unable to reach his intended victim, who was on the opposite side of the table, he suddenly turned to Harley, stooped down, and exclaiming, "*à toi donc*," struck him on the breast. The knife breaking on the bone, he repeated the blow with the broken blade, and while he was raising his hand to give a third stroke, he was attacked by St. John and the other members of the cabinet, with their drawn swords. After receiving several wounds, he was with difficulty secured, and conveyed to Newgate, where he soon died of the injury which he suffered in the struggle. This horrid attempt produced the deepest sensation, and conjecture was exhausted in endeavouring to trace the motives of the assassin.*

Amidst the interest which so barbarous an attempt excited, Harley became the object of general sympathy. Public business was suspended; his door was crowded with inquirers of every class; and the queen, the senate, and the nation, vied in the testimonies of their regard, to one who was considered as a victim devoted for his public services. His wounds were slight, and he was soon declared out of danger; but the impulse which had been given to national feeling continued to operate, and it appeared as if the fate of England depended on his recovery.

* It is curious to observe the different versions of this attempt, as given by Swift in the Examiner.

"The murderer confessed in Newgate that his chief design was against Mr. Secretary St. John, who happened to change seats with Mr. Harley, for more convenience of examining the criminal. Being asked what provoked him to stab the chancellor, he said, that not being able to come at the secretary as he intended, it was some satisfaction to murder the person whom he thought Mr. St. John loved best."

This account was doubtless communicated by Secretary St. John, but as it was displeasing to Harley and his friends, Swift, in a subsequent number, confessed it to be a blunder.

"* * * The third is a blunder, that I say Guiscard's design was against Mr. Secretary St. John, and yet my reasonings upon it are as if it were personally against Mr. Harley. But I say no such thing, and my reasonings are just. I relate only what Guiscard said in Newgate."—*Examiner*, No. 32, 33.

This subterfuge is remarkable, because we learn from Swift himself, in a subsequent publication, that St. John disputed with Harley the honour of being the intended victim, and took umbrage that the whole merit was ascribed to his colleague. — *Swift's Account of the late Change of Ministry.*

Marlborough was greatly shocked at the news of this flagitious attempt, and, in sympathy for the sufferings of the minister, forgot his former ingratitude. He writes with abhorrence of the barbarous villany of Guiscard, and, while he congratulates Harley on his escape, expresses the utmost anxiety for his recovery.

While the attention of all classes in England was arrested by the struggles of contending factions, and the hopes and fears of the public hung on the life of the wounded minister, the military preparations proceeded with unusual activity; and the views of Europe were again turned to the events of war and the campaign, which was expected to exhibit the final effort of the French monarchy.

Marlborough was on the point of quitting the Hague, when intelligence arrived of still deeper interest, which he thus communicates to Mr. Harley: —

"*Hague, April* 22. — I have been unwilling to trouble you during your illness, but do it now, in hopes my letter may find you abroad, and perfectly recovered. I sent off a packet-boat yesterday morning, express, with letters to Mr. St. John, to give an account of the emperor's being taken ill of the small-pox. The effect that distemper has had on the Dauphin puts these people here under the greatest consternation. They are sensible, if he should die at this juncture, it would put all the affairs of the allies into such confusion, that they can have no recourse, under God, but to England for their safety. I am obliged to leave this place to-morrow morning early, in order to hasten to the army, where my presence is the more necessary at this critical time. I did not think, when I despatched my letters last night, to have troubled Mr. St. John the following post; but this matter is of such consequence that I shall be obliged to write to him before I go to bed, or to-morrow morning, before I take coach, being willing to stay the last minute, to see whether we may have any later news from Vienna, so shall desire leave to refer you to him, and only add that the measures that will be taken at this time, are, what may bring the States to an entire dependence on her majesty and the ministry, on which our common safety must, in a great measure, depend. I am, truly," &c.

While the general was hastening to the army, and had already reached Tournay, fondly expecting the immediate presence of Eugene, and anticipating a brilliant opening of the campaign, by the commencement of offensive operations, in conformity with the assurances recently received from his illustrious colleague*, he was shocked with intelligence of

* Letters from Eugene to Marlborough, March 21.

the event which he had foreboded; an event which clouded all their prospects, and changed, in an instant, the fate of the war, and the destiny of Europe. This was the sudden death of the emperor Joseph, who, by the malignity of his disorder, was hurried to the grave in a few days, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign. Marlborough immediately transmitted the disastrous intelligence to Secretary St. John, with an inclosure from Prince Eugene, which characterises the feelings of his heroic mind at this awful crisis.

"*Tournay, April* 29. — When I writ to you by last post I was pretty easy from what I had from Count Zinzendorf, in relation to the news from Vienna; but yesterday noon I received the inclosed letter from him, with the account of the emperor's death, which, you may believe me, puts our affairs here in no little confusion. You here have what the prince of Savoy writes to me, and a copy of his to Count Zinzendorf, as also of the count's to me, on this subject, and will observe the apprehensions I entertain of having the imperial and palatine troops called away, which puts us so much to a stand, that we shall not dare to venture upon any siege, since, if we lose this corps, though we had never so fine a prospect, it would entirely break our measures."

Prince Eugene to the Duke.

"*Mentz, April* 28. — Sir, — Your highness, I doubt not, is apprised of what has retarded my journey until now. It appears to be an absolute fatality. This Turkish aga made us wait for him a long time, notwithstanding all the expedients that were used to hasten his coming. I was setting out, two days after having given him audiences, and in this interval the emperor fell sick. I departed, however, on the 16th at day-break, by his order, as he was believed to be out of danger.* The same day, towards evening, his malady increased, and he died next morning at eleven. Your highness knows what a blow this is to the affairs of Europe; but it is still more severe to those who had the honour to serve him, and particularly to me, who have always felt a strong attachment to his person. I received, in consequence, an express from the empress-mother, who governs in the name of King Charles, to come and confer with the elector of Mentz, and to take the command of the empire, as marshal. I am, therefore, going to-morrow. If the enemy make no great movements on this side, I think I shall receive orders to go into Holland, and to confer, on my route, with the electors of Treves and Palatine; but if, with a view to profit by this opportunity, they reinforce themselves on the side of the empire, it will then be necessary to do the same. I therefore send an order to Count Felz, to obey your highness in all things until my

* It appears from a letter of Count Zinzendorf, that the emperor would not permit Eugene to pay his final visit, because the prince had never had the small-pox.

arrival, and hold himself in readiness to march hither at the first order. Your highness may be assured that I shall not send to him but in case of necessity; but you know that in these circumstances, and in an interregnum like the present, affairs do not go on without alarm, and a little confusion. I hope to see your highness soon, though that is not wholly certain. Believe me," &c.

Many fatal consequences flowed from this disastrous event. The energies of the house of Austria were palsied at the commencement of a new reign, and the immediate exertions for securing the elevation of Charles to the throne of the empire, suspended the military operations in the Netherlands, and frustrated the projects of the two commanders; because it required the presence of the German troops, with their great chief, in the empire, and because many of the minor princes of the Germanic body were likely to withdraw their contingents, who had already joined, or withhold those who were on their march. Another unfortunate result was, that it revived the ancient jealousy against the house of Austria, lest Charles, by uniting his hereditary dominions with the Spanish monarchy and the crown of the empire, should consolidate a power equal to that which, under Charles V., had threatened the liberties of Europe. This jealousy instantly manifested itself in England; and the British ministers artfully availed themselves of it, to forward their negotiations with France, by insinuating that the interests of England and Europe would be less endangered by a partition of the Spanish monarchy between the Bourbon and Austrian families, provided the crowns of Spain and France were separated, than by sanctioning such an accumulation of territory in the head of the house of Austria. Insinuations so favourable to the views of Louis were naturally countenanced by the French partisans, and the monarch himself acted with consummate address, by secretly promoting the elevation of Charles, while he publicly affected to support the elector of Bavaria.

The first object of the British and Dutch cabinets, on this alarming emergency, was to secure the election of the Austrian prince. Secretary St. John sent immediate orders to the Duke of Marlborough to co-operate with Eugene and the States, and we soon afterwards find the general announcing this resolution of the British cabinet to King Charles, and presaging its accomplishment.

"*June* 3. — Sire, — I have received, with all due respect, the letter which your majesty was pleased to write to me on the 9th of last month, on learning the mournful intelligence of the death of the emperor. I can assure your majesty that all persons, both in England and in these countries, have been most deeply affected by it, yet not a moment has been lost in taking the requisite measures on so unexpected an event. Your majesty will have been already informed of the resolutions, which the queen and the States instantly, and without the smallest hesitation, adopted in favour of your majesty, for your elevation to the throne of the empire; and there is no reason to doubt that your majesty will be elected without the least difficulty, notwithstanding the intrigues of our enemies, who hoped to have taken advantage of this opportunity to throw the affairs of the empire into confusion. But the peace with Hungary, which immediately ensued, has almost induced them to forego their design. It is also a singular mark of the divine protection over the august house to have accomplished that work in a conjuncture when there was little hope, and when, on the contrary, it was to have been apprehended that the Hungarians would have assumed a higher tone. We have reason to augur that Providence will continue more and more to shed its precious blessings on the reign of your majesty. Affairs in this country are not in a very promising state. We have been in the field more than a month, and the enemy still maintain themselves in an inaccessible camp, having taken great care to fortify the fordable parts of the rivers; but I yet hope that God will grant us a favourable opportunity for attacking them, which is what we ought most earnestly to desire, and to that object we direct all our attention.

"I intreat your majesty to be assured that I have nothing more at heart than to prove my entire devotion by my actions, and that I shall ever employ myself for your interests, being, with all respect," &c.

In the midst of the anxiety and suspense created by this momentous event, the contending armies in the Netherlands again took the field. The great object of the French monarch being to prevent the irruption of the allied forces beyond the interior line of fortresses which covered the frontier on the side of Arras and Cambray, Villars had employed the latter part of the preceding campaign in forming a series of lines, of considerable strength, which had been greatly augmented during the winter. Early in the spring he quitted Paris, began to assemble his forces in the vicinity of Cambray, and had the satisfaction to find his formidable works completed.

This grand system of defence embraced a line extending from Namur, on the Meuse, to the coast of Picardy. It ran along the marshy banks of the Canche, and was supported by the posts of Montroueil, Hesdin, and Frevent, while the greater fortresses of Ypres, Dunkirk, Gravelines, Calais, and

St. Omer, in front, contributed to render the approach more difficult. Across the plain which stretches between the Canche and the Gy, ran a series of connected redans, beginning at Oppy, near Rebreuve, and terminating at Montenancourt, the two flanks of which were supported with strong redoubts. The rivulet Gy, to its junction with the Scarpe, and the Scarpe to Biache, were checked by small dams, which caused inundations. Along the line of this natural defence were redoubts, or works, at Pont du Gy, and below Arras, at Athies, Fampoux, and Biache; the three latter places served as têtes-de-pont. At Biache a canal of communication was opened from the Scarpe by Saille, to the marshes and inundations of the Sanzet, near L'Ecluse. At this place, as well as at Pallue and Aubanchoeil-au-bac, were narrow dams, sustaining causeways across the inundations, and defended by a redoubt and fortified water-mill, and a small garrison in the castle. The fire of these posts protected a dam, which was laid across the canal of communication with Douay, and by retaining the supply of water, rendered the navigation almost useless. At Aubigny, opposite Aubanchoeil-au-bac, was a redoubt, and farther on the fortress of Bouchain, while têtes-de-pont at Neuville and Denain, covered the course of the Scheld to Valenciennes. From hence ran a series of intrenchments to the Sambre, supported by Quesnoi and Landrecies; and along that river Maubeuge and Charleroi completed the line of defence as far as Namur.

The armies had now begun to assemble, and, with a heavy heart, Marlborough quitted Tournay to assume the command, with little hopes of being joined by his illustrious colleague, who was still detained in the empire. On the 30th of April he fixed his head quarters at Orchies, between Lille and Douay, where the greater part of his troops were collected. The imperialists were posted at Pont à Marque; while the forces under the British general extended to Candus. Their total amount was 184 battalions and 364 squadrons, of which 65 battalions and 120 squadrons belonged to the army of Eugene.*

* There is considerable discordance in the estimates of the relative strength of the armies in the printed accounts of this campaign. Milner and Lediard compute them as follows: —

On the first of May, in the evening, the allies again moved forward in two columns by the left, crossing the marshes and bridge over the Scarpe, at Lalain, and debouched by the wood of Pecquencourt. The imperialists, forming the right, extended from Ferin and Goeulzin to Lietard; while the forces of Marlborough stretched from thence on the left beyond Somain. Here they found themselves in presence of the French, who were posted behind the marshes bordering the Sanzet and the Scheld. The head quarters of Villars were established at Oisy, while his right extended beyond Bouchain, and his left to Monchy le Preux.

On the 4th of May Marlborough thus writes to Godolphin: — "Whilst I thought you at Newmarket I have not troubled you with any of my letters. Since our being in the field, we have had, and have still, very wet weather. The marshal de Villars was pleased to tell my trumpet yesterday that the death of the emperor would occasion great disorders among

	Batt.	Squad.	
Marlborough	119	226	111 field pieces 8 howitzers, 40 pontoons.
Eugene	65	120	
Total	184	346	
Deduct in garrison	43	40	
Remains	141	306	Brigadier Hill, brother of Mrs. Masham, obtained 5000 men for the conquest of Quebec; these, all British, probably left the Duke in the plains of Lens.
Brigadier Hill 10 / Eugene's detachment 12	22	50	
Total in the field	119	256	

But it appears that Eugene took more than 50 squadrons; indeed all his cavalry, which left Marlborough only 119 battalions, with 226 squadrons. Quincy gives Marlborough 94 battalions, 145 squadrons, and Eugene, 47 battalions, 111 squadrons, which would make 141 battalions, 256 squadrons. Deducting 12 battalions and 50 squadrons as the corps which Eugene took away, there would remain 129 battalions, 206 squadrons. The French biographer makes the combined allied force 141 battalions, 246 squadrons, and this computation comes nearer the truth. He estimates the army of Villars at 156 battalions, 227 squadrons; from which having detached 25 battalions, 41 squadrons, a total remained of 131 battalions, 186 squadrons. This was the field force; for Milner and others estimate the whole at 192 battalions, 348 squadrons. The difference, if correct, arose probably from the forces stationed in the garrisons and the numerous posts the French lines required. The French artillery, &c., were computed at 90 field pieces, 12 howitzers, and 30 pontoons.

the allies, and that he should be 30,000 stronger than we; however, this does not hinder him from doing all in his power for the strengthening his camp, so that as yet we lie very quiet on both sides. I know not what projects the emperor's death may put them upon on the side of Germany; but if their superiority be as great as he says it will be, I should not apprehend much from them, but that of their being able to hinder us from acting, which to my own particular, would be mortification enough; for since constant success has not met with approbation, what may I not expect when nothing is done! As I rely very much on Providence, so I shall be ready of approving all occasions that may offer."

Amidst all the anxiety of the crisis, his domestic tenderness breaks forth to the duchess. "*May* 7. — By yours of the 4th I find that you mean to be in your house* this winter. My only design in building that house was to please you; and I am afraid your going into it so soon may prejudice your health, so that you must be careful of having it well examined at the end of September; for should it not be thoroughly dry, you ought to stay one year longer. * * * We have had miserable wet weather ever since we came into the field, and I pity the poor men so much, that it makes me uneasy to the last degree, for it can't be otherwise but great numbers must be sick."

By the same post we find a sensible letter to the duke of Shrewsbury, in reply to his request for advice and information in the critical situation of affairs.

"*Camp at Warde, May* 7. — The mails of the 14th and 17th instant came to hand together, and brought me the favour of your grace's letter, wherein you desire my thoughts upon the present posture of affairs, which is a matter of such consequence, and so intricate, and I am so conscious of my own incapacity, that were it not to comply with your grace's directions, and that I know it will not be exposed, I should hardly venture on so difficult a task. Your grace will have heard already the steps the States took upon the first notice of the emperor's death, and how many of the electors have already declared in favour of King Charles, for setting him upon the throne of the empire. This being entirely agreeable to her majesty's inclinations on this unfortunate occasion, I conclude it will meet with no other difficulty than the delay that must necessarily attend the usual formalities.

* He alludes to the new mansion in Pall Mall, called Marlborough House.

"The next and main point to be considered is what relates to the Spanish monarchy; and here, I must own, I foresee so many, and such insuperable difficulties, that I am very much at a loss how to form, as yet, any scheme; at least till I hear what steps the earl of Peterborough may have taken with the court of Vienna and the duke of Savoy; for, in my opinion, we must avoid, with the greatest care imaginable, giving the least jealousy or disgust to either of these courts, till we can see clearly what may be most for the public good. In all probability King Charles will be soon coming to Germany; for some time at least his absence must very much encourage the duke of Anjou's party, and, 'tis to be feared, will alienate the affections of the Spaniards and Catalans from him, so that we may have a harder game to play on that side than ever. We must likewise manage matters with the greatest caution with respect to the duke of Savoy, who, 'tis not to be doubted, will lay in his claim. His royal highness should have the prospect of some considerable advantage to his family upon this great change, and should be shown that his whole reliance for it must be on the Maritime Powers, and be excited, at the same time, to exert himself to the utmost, in such manner as shall be concerted together; so that he may thereby better deserve her majesty's and the States' friendship. In all cases nothing can contribute so much to bring us out of our present difficulties as a perfect harmony between England and Holland. This is so evidently the interest of both, that I have reason to hope the States will readily come into such measures as her majesty shall judge most conducive to our common good. It will influence all the allies, keep them steady, and give a greater weight and lustre to all her majesty's councils, which must weaken and discourage, at the same time, our common enemy. I have given your grace here my thoughts, by which you will see I have as yet but a very imperfect notion of the present juncture of affairs. When I am better informed, and any thing farther occurs, I will take the liberty of imparting it to you, and should be glad likewise to have your opinion when you have heard what the earl of Peterborough has been doing in Italy."

Posted beyond the concave form of that part of the line which extended from Bouchain to Monchy le Preux, Villars considered himself effectively protected from an attack; while the fortresses, projecting like horns at the extremity of this crescent, concealed and facilitated the operations of his detachments against the convoys, the flanks, or the rear of his opponents.

After passing nearly three weeks in a war of convoys, in which the enemy, from their position, reaped occasional advantage, Marlborough had the satisfaction to hear that his illustrious colleague, Eugene, had completed all his arrangements in the empire, and was on his way to the Hague, from whence he purposed to join the army. On the 18th he thus briefly announces their meeting to the duchess: — At my

return last night from Pont à Marque, where I went to meet Prince Eugene, I found myself so out of order that I have been obliged for some days to keep at home; but, thank God, I am this day so much better that I doubt not of being on horseback to-morrow. I let you know this, fearing you might hear it from others, and think it worse than it is. My illness was giddiness and swimmings in my head, which gave me often sickness in my stomach."

His numerous vexations, indeed, continued to produce a serious effect on his health and spirits, of which the preceding note affords an indication. On receiving intelligence of the death of his former colleague and friend, Lord Rochester, he dwells feelingly on his increasing infirmities, and anticipates his own dissolution.

"*May* 25.—I have received the favour of yours of the 4th, by which I see Lord Rochester is gone where we must follow. I believe my journey will be hastened by the many vexations I meet with. I agree entirely with you that men are never wanted; I am sure I wish well to my country, and if I could do good I should think no pains too great; but I find myself decay so very fast, that from my heart and soul I wish the queen and my country a peace, by which I might have the advantage of enjoying a little quiet, which is my greatest ambition.

"The peace of Hungary I should hope might be a good step towards peace, especially if the king of Sweden should not succeed in his projects; for I believe the king of France is in great expectation of what may be done on that side. I have already told you that we are very considerably weaker, and the enemy much stronger than the last campaign, so that God only knows how this may end."

In this interval Marlborough had the satisfaction of hailing the presence of his colleague, who reached the camp of Lewarde on the 23d, and joined in the festival which the British commander gave to his companions in arms on the anniversary of the victory at Ramilies, the commemoration of which infused additional spirit and energy into the whole army.* His head quarters that evening were fixed in the abbey of Auchin. The succeeding days were devoted to political and military arrangements; and on the 28th the two generals reviewed the whole army at the head of the camp. Marlborough was anxious to detain his illustrious colleague and the imperial troops in the Netherlands, for the purpose of prosecuting offensive operations; but the intelligence which arrived of the intended march of French detachments

* Milner.

to the Rhine created such an alarm at Vienna, that Eugene received positive orders to detach the principal part of his forces to that quarter, in order to repel the expected attempts of the enemy to thwart the election. Accordingly, on the 13th of June, General Cadogan, with the quarter-masters of the army, repaired to Lens to mark out a new camp; while the prince of Hesse, with 30 squadrons, occupied the heights of Sailly, in front of Vitry, in order to cover the intended movement. At two the ensuing morning, the whole army broke up, and while the reinforcements for Germany filed off to the rear, the forces under the British general marched by the right in six columns. They traversed the Scarpe between Vitry and Douay, and extended across the plains of Lens, placing their right at Lievin, on the Sonchet, and the left towards Equerchin. The baggage turned to the rear of Douay, and rejoined the army by crossing the canal at Auby and Dourges.

On the same day the two generals parted from each other for the last time during the war, and took leave with deepest sentiments of regret, and anxious forebodings for the future. Eugene proceeded to Tournay, and afterwards repaired to the Hague, to sooth the alarms of the Dutch, and obtain their consent to the intended march of the imperialists towards the Rhine. Here he was detained till the middle of July in concerting the military operations in Germany, and making such arrangements as were rendered necessary by a new rupture between Sweden and Denmark, which threatened to involve the princes of the north. From thence he hurried towards the Rhine in the latter end of July, and passed the remainder of the campaign in covering the diet of election, and watching the movements of the French army under Marshal Harcourt.

Although Villars exulted in this diminution of the forces to which he was opposed, and displayed his characteristic confidence, he also, like his great antagonist, felt the irksomeness and insecurity of his own situation. The troops, discouraged by the length and disasters of the war, deserted in numbers, and the officers were destitute of pay and resources; while the scarcity of subsistence obliged him to scatter his cavalry towards the rear, and his movements were cramped by the want of draught horses for the conveyance of

his artillery. At the same time, to use his own words, his hands were tied by his sovereign, who, intent on other projects, broke his measures by positive orders to avoid an engagement.*

In this situation, however, he displayed as much activity and energy as were consistent with his instructions. On the 14th of June, when the allies withdrew from their position, he made a corresponding movement with his left to join 60 squadrons advancing from their cantonments on the Crinchon, and then halted, with his two flanks at Montenancourt and Biache, and his centre at Fampoux; while his head quarters were established in the suburbs of Arras.

The position of the allied army on the open plains of Lens was an evident offer of battle, while he affected anxiety to accept. For this purpose, he threw 18 bridges over the Scarpe, ordered several reconnoitrings, and gave every demonstration of a design to engage: but all his manœuvres terminated in a few trifling skirmishes, and an attempt to surprise the castle of Vimy, in which he was repulsed.

Meanwhile a corps of 15 battalions and 15 squadrons had been drawn from his army to the Rhine; and on the 28th of June, a still farther reduction of his forces took place, by the march of a second detachment, of 10 battalions and 26 squadrons, to the same destination. He was thus left with an army of 131 battalions, and 186 squadrons; and though superior in infantry to his opponents, he was now too weak in cavalry, even had the orders of his court permitted him, to measure his strength with his able antagonists on the open plains of Lens.

CHAP. CI. — CONDUCT OF THE TORY MINISTRY. — 1711.

IN this position the two armies remained stationary a month, and we therefore avail ourselves of the interval of suspense, to resume our review of political affairs in England, as far

* Mem. de Villars, tom. ii. An. 1711.

as they regarded the interests or feelings of the British commander.

We have already adverted to the commencement of the clandestine negotiation with France, and the mysterious secrecy hitherto preserved towards the Duke of Marlborough. Since that period, the negotiation had rapidly advanced, and Louis, discovering daily new proofs of a favourable disposition in the British ministry, accomplished his purpose of establishing a separate intercourse, by declaring his resolution to make no farther direct communication to the States. This proposal was readily accepted, and, on the 27th of April, secretary St. John transmitted to Lord Raby, the new plenipotentiary at the Hague, a sketch of six preliminary articles offered by the French court, as the foundation of a general treaty of peace. The high tone of this overture sufficiently indicated the advantages which the enemy had reaped from the recent changes in England.

No longer treating the possession of Spain as a question in dispute, the king of France expatiated on his own means to maintain the war with glory, and offered terms calculated to lure the commercial cupidity of England, to the detriment of her better interests. He promised real security to the British trade to Spain, the Indies, and the Mediterranean, a sufficient barrier to the Dutch, conformably to the wish of the British nation, and freedom of commerce to the subjects of the republic. A reasonable satisfaction was also tendered all the allies of England and Holland. He added, that as the advantageous situation of Spain left no room for difficulty, new expedients might be devised to regulate the succession of that monarchy to the satisfaction of all parties interested. On the acceptance of these conditions, conferences were to be opened; and the British ministry were flattered with the option of treating with the French plenipotentiaries, in conjunction with Holland alone, or jointly with the ministers of all the allies. Liege, or Aix-la-Chapelle, was proposed as the place of congress; but the choice was left to the queen.

Lord Raby*, on the receipt of these overtures, was ordered secretly to impart them to the pensionary, with the

* Soon afterwards created earl of Strafford.

resolution of her majesty to act in concert with the States in making both peace and war ; but as a peculiar mark of slight and reserve to the general, the secretary adds, "the Duke of Marlborough has no communication from hence of this affair; I suppose he will have none from the Hague."*

This negotiation had been pursued by Harley with the evident purpose of connecting the arrangements for peace with his new system of domestic policy and finance. After a tedious confinement, he had gratified the general expectation by appearing in public, and resuming the functions of his office. He was hailed with all the exultation which could be inspired by the interest taken in his safety, and received the congratulations of the commons, which were conveyed in a style of adulation seldom paid even to sovereigns themselves. He availed himself of the impression which his re-appearance produced, to bring forward his grand plan of finance.

On the 2d of May, he disclosed to the commons his scheme for satisfying the national creditors, who had long and anxiously expected the development of his plan. It was doubtless conceived with great ingenuity, and calculated to dazzle the public mind, ever more intent on distant and splendid profits, than on immediate and solid advantages. The debts of the navy, ordnance, and other branches of the public service, which amounted to between nine and ten millions, were to be funded on the faith of parliament, and bear an interest of 6 per cent., payable from the taxes granted for the service of the preceding year. As these supplies were, however, mortgaged till 1716, adequate provision was to be made in the interval, for the discharge of the interest; and the impositions then appropriated were to be rendered perpetual. To draw contributions to this fund, the subscribers were incorporated into a company, which was to enjoy the monopoly of the lucrative trade to Mexico and Peru, and other parts of the Spanish Indies.

The attractions of present interest and future profit, joined to the actual popularity of the proposer, repressed the spirit of investigation ; and, instead of adverting to the fundamental defects of the scheme, or the chimerical contingencies

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 175.

on which it depended, it was hailed as the highest effort of financial genius, and eagerly embraced without the slightest consideration. It was also regarded by many as the pledge of a peace with France; because the establishment of a trade to the Spanish Indies could only be founded on a secret understanding with the two Bourbon courts; and, indeed, the conjecture so far rested on fact, that the first article of the French proposals comprised, as we have already seen, an engagement to secure the English in the enjoyment of a trade to Spain, the Indies, and all the ports of the Mediterranean.

All things seemed to smile on the fortunate minister; for on the very day on which he developed this popular scheme, the sudden death of the earl of Rochester delivered him from a colleague in office, who was a powerful rival for the royal favour, who gave energy and consistency to the efforts of the violent Tories, and who waited only the development of his plan to expose its defects. Harley was now paramount in the cabinet, enjoyed the full confidence of the sovereign, guided the house of commons, and was at once the dispenser of royal favour, and the idol of the day. The national voice already began to chide the tardiness of the queen in delaying to invest him with honours equal to his merits and services; but the wishes of the public were soon gratified, for before the end of May he was raised to the peerage, by the royal title of earl of Oxford and Mortimer, and constituted lord high treasurer.

The changes which arose out of the death of Rochester, were equally favourable to Harley and his party; for the duke of Buckingham was appointed to the vacant post of president of the council, Lord Poulett was transferred from the treasury board to the office of lord high steward, and the chancellorship of the exchequer was given to Mr. Benson, a mere cipher in office, and a dependant on his principal.

As every step of Harley's political career had evinced anxiety to ground his reputation on the ruin of that of his predecessor, so he did not disdain to suffer even his patent of peerage to convey a cruel, though covert stigma on the late treasurer. After a fulsome panegyric on his own merits as a statesman, the new peer is described as the champion of public credit, the deliverer of his country from the *pest of*

*peculation and plunder**, as well as the founder of a new system of domestic finance, and of foreign commerce to the western world.

With the same view he suffered a special committee to be appointed for the purpose of continuing the investigation of the public accounts. This committee consisted of seven persons peculiarly hostile to the late administration, being either violent Tories, or notorious Jacobites.† After a severe and scrutinizing investigation, they laid before the house a series of charges against the late financial administration, for not having accounted for the sums voted by parliament, and for flagrant embezzlements of the public revenue.

On the 15th of May the report of the committee was taken into consideration, and certain resolutions were proposed. 1. That the increase of the expenses beyond the annual supplies had been the chief occasion of the national debts. 2. That certain sums, issued for the service of the navy, had been appropriated to the use of the army. 3. That this transfer had been injurious to the navy. 4. That the application of any unappropriated sums was a misapplication of the public money.

These propositions were evidently levelled against the late treasurer, and were supported by the whole force of the ministerial party. In the course of the preparatory discussion, St. John employed all the arts of his splendid and plausible eloquence in favour of the inquiry; boldly asserting, that none but those who were enemies to their country, or who had themselves plundered the treasury, could be so rash as to oppose it.

The friends of Godolphin, and the adherents of the Whigs, combated this inquisitorial scrutiny with equal force; and among the ablest of these advocates, we find the name of Walpole‡, arguing against such an indiscriminate censure, and such a rancorous spirit of malicious persecution. The resolutions, however, were carried by a very great majority,

* "Latè grassanti peculatus pesti coercendæ, novisque ad alterum orbem commerciis instituendis consulent."

† Among these were Shippen and Lockhart.—Chandler's Debates and Journals.

‡ Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, ch. vi.—Cunningham, v. ii. p. 349.

and we subjoin a very sensible letter to the duchess from Mr. Maynwaring, who was present on this occasion.

"*Tuesday, past six o'clock.**—I am just now come from the house of commons, were this day was set apart again to pass censures on the late treasury. Their first vote was, that the exceeding the several sums granted by parliament has been the chief occasion of the debts of the navy, and a violation of the rights of parliament. This was carried by above two to one, and three more questions, depending upon it, without a division; one of which was moved by your friend, Mr. Bathurst, who reflected on the land-service, and concluded that the applying any part of the money given to the navy to the payment of the troops, was a sad mismanagement, &c. This has been done sometimes, 'tis true, but never without an absolute necessity, and the navy has always been repaid out of the pay of those troops. * * * * * * All the great successes of the war have been carried by these exceeding and extraordinary payments that they have censured. And the parliament always gives a discretionary allowance; and there was intimation in their debates, that if the money did not answer the service of the current year, there could be no doubt but every thing would be made good that was laid out upon great and unforeseen services. And how is it possible for a parliament to provide for things which may be most necessary to be done within the year, which, perhaps, the ministers know nothing of when the supplies are granted, or if they should know, would not be fit to be divulged! Yet, now, all this is mismanagement and misapplication."

On the 24th, the commons appointed another committee to draw up a general report of these and other abuses, to be laid before the queen; and Auditor Harley, the brother of the treasurer, had the principal share in preparing it.† The new committee did not fail to discharge the functions imposed upon them with all the vindictive spirit which actuated the ministers. Their representation, after several votes and resolutions, was finally embodied in a general address to the queen, which was presented on the 4th of June. After applauding the zeal of the legislature, in voting supplies, and discharging the public debt, it stated, that in tracing the causes of these debts, the commissioners had discovered notorious embezzlements and mismanagements in public offices, misapplication of parliamentary grants, and frauds and depredations of the most flagrant kind. They remarked, "from all these evil practices and worse designs of some persons, who had, by false professions of love to their coun-

* Plainly written on Tuesday, the 15th of May, the day when the resolutions were proposed.—See Journals.

† Boyer's Queen Anne, p. 497.

try, insinuated themselves into your royal favour, irreparable mischief had accrued to the public, had not your majesty, in your wisdom, seasonably discovered the fatal tendency of such measures, and out of your singular goodness to your people, removed from the administration of affairs, those who had so ill answered the favourable opinion your majesty had conceived of them, and, in so many instances, grossly abused the trust reposed in them." The commissioners summed up the series of their accusations with declaring that of the monies granted by parliament for the public service to Christmas, 1710, no less a sum than 35,302,107*l.* remained unaccounted for, of a great part of which no accounts had ever been so much as laid before the auditor.*

This unjust and calumnious report produced an almost electric effect. The people, accustomed to regard the decisions of the legislature with reverence and respect, could not conceive that the solemn sanction of parliament would have been given to a statement principally founded on erroneous grounds. The Whigs, therefore, became more than ever the objects of popular obloquy ; and the late changes were not only hailed as the salvation of the country, but the new ministers acquired additional confidence for the care and vigilance which they had thus appeared to display in the detection of abuses, and their ability in redeeming the public credit. Under the impression produced by this masterstroke of political craft, the parliament was prorogued, and the members dispersed, to extend its effects, and spread the same malignant spirit among their respective constituents.

The ebullition of public favour was, however, too violent to be durable ; and Oxford soon found that envy and rivalry are the constant associates of favour and power. Even among his colleagues and dependents, he experienced a change of sentiment ; for St. John, who had hitherto acted a subordinate part, began to repine at his paramount ascendancy, and complained of his coldness and reserve, his monopoly of royal favour, and his dilatoriness in the conduct of public business. He thus expresses his complaints in a confidential letter to the earl of Orrery : "Mr. Harley, since his recovery, has not appeared at the council, or at the treasury at all, and very seldom in the house of commons. We,

* History of Europe for 1711, p. 215. — Journals and Debates.

who are reputed to be in his intimacy, have few opportunities of seeing him, and none of talking freely with him. As he is *the only true channel* through which the queen's pleasure is conveyed, so there is, and must be, a perfect stagnation, till he is pleased to open himself, and set the water flowing.*

The new treasurer had now developed all his designs, and the public having no longer novelties to amuse, or hopes and fears to occupy their attention, began to cool in their attachment, and to regard with indifference what they had so highly applauded. St. John, who formed a just estimate of his situation, observes, "He stands on slippery grounds, and envy is always near the great to fling up their heels, on the least trip which they make. Many changes," he adds, "have been made at the rising of the parliament, and although they are such as ought to satisfy our friends, yet the number of the discontented must always exceed that of the contented, as the number of pretenders does that of employments."†

Oxford himself was too discerning to be ignorant of his precarious situation. He well knew the uncertainty of public opinion, and was aware that when the burst of popular enthusiasm was past, the plenitude of royal favour would scarcely suffice to shield him against the attacks of open enemies, the insidious machinations of discontented adherents, or the wiles of envious courtiers. He therefore resumed his former policy of cajoling all parties, and endeavoured to sustain his credit and power, by luring their cupidity, or exciting their mutual antipathies.

In the midst of his perplexity and forebodings, the death of the duke of Newcastle, who held the office of lord privy seal, produced a crisis in his political life. For the vacant post, numerous candidates started from different parties, all dangerous to disoblige. Among these, we distinguish the earl of Nottingham, head of the violent Tories, and Lord Somers, who was strongly recommended by the duke and duchess of Somerset, and whose admission into the ministry was expected to ensure the support of the Whigs, Godolphin, and Marlborough. Oxford, however, would not associate Nottingham in office, from a dread of his overbearing tem-

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 216.

† St. John to the earl of Orrery, June 12. 1711.

per, and the influence he possessed among the violent Tories; nor could he admit Somers, even if inclined to accept the post, without exposing himself to the charge of inconsistency, and to the danger of being overborne by the Whigs, whom he had so grievously offended.* Finding that peace alone could secure his power, he promoted to the vacant office the earl of Jersey, who had been the first channel of his negotiations with France; and, on his sudden death, he resorted to the unusual expedient of conferring it on a churchman, Dr. Robinson, dean of Rochester, soon afterwards raised to the see of Bristol, who had signalised himself by his skill in negotiation, and whom he destined for the office of plenipotentiary at the congress, for which arrangements were already making.

In this state of perplexity some mutual friends attempted to form a coalition of parties, and promote his reconciliation

* It is very difficult to ascertain the real intentions and motives of so subtle a politician as Harley; but we learn from the contemporary evidence of Cunningham, as well as from the letters of Mr. Maynwaring to the duchess, that he was again successful in luring and deceiving the Whigs. — See Cunningham, vol. ii. book 14. passim.

In one of his letters, dated May 4. Mr. Maynwaring observes to the duchess, "He (Mr. Harley) has taken care to inform the world, that he is to be treasurer, and made a peer, with Sir. S. Harcourt, of which I had a long, and I believe, true account, last night from an intimate friend of the duke of Newcastle, who was always that to Mr. Harley. He told me that the queen was the most impatient in the world to have Mr. Harley preferred. That the president's place had been offered to every one of the cabinet round, and that the duke of Buckingham would have it at last, to make way for Lord Poulett. That there never had been any thought of Lord Nottingham, but quite the contrary. That Mr. Harley would think his power at an end if that person were taken in, which would only give life and encouragement to that party, which he intended to weaken. And that this man agreed exactly with your grace. That although Lord Halifax, Lord Somers, and Lord Sunderland had endeavoured to be well with him, he certainly fooled them who were the last men in the nation that he would have any thing to do with; and that for Lord Halifax, he was like the fly upon the wheel, that would always thrust himself upon people, and fancy he did great matters, when, in truth, he only made himself ridiculous, and would never bring the least thing about. I am pretty confident that all this was said by the duke of Newcastle. And I have often wondered how Lord Halifax's great spirit could ever bear to speak again with Mr. Harley, when he had been so shamefully exposed last year, about his own going to Holland, and his compounding matters at home."

with the Whigs and the Duke of Marlborough.* He himself either saw the advantages of the proposal, or deemed it necessary to avert the hostilities of his political opponents, by continuing to flatter their hopes. With this view, we find him in his correspondence with the general, resuming his former tone of devotion and respect; and affecting as much interest in his plans, and as warm an attachment to his person, as are displayed even in the letters of Godolphin himself.

From the Earl of Oxford.

"My lord, *Kensington, June 26.–July 7.*

"I received the honour of your grace's letter by the last mail, and I beg you will be assured, that as I receive the obliging expressions therein as marks of your grace's favour, so I shall study to deserve it, and never give any just occasion to alter your opinion. I have sent a hundred thousand pounds for the service of the army, and did intend to have settled the remittance for the whole campaign, but that I have a prospect of making a better bargain for the public. I have got one stiver in the last hundred thousand pounds, it being at eleven stivers. I hope to present your grace, next week, with the state of the payments thus far, and a scheme for the rest of the year.

"As to Woodstock, I have got from Mr. Vanbrugh an estimate of the works, which are yet to be performed; and I will lay before the queen a scheme for weekly payments, though the debt on the family grows very clamorous; the whole, upon the present civil list, being about four hundred thousand pounds, during the queen's reign.

"I do not doubt but Mr. Secretary gives your grace an account that Lord Peterborough arrived here on Sunday. For my own part, I have not had an opportunity of hearing the detail of his proceedings; but the secretary has, and, I presume, will give your grace notice of what is remarkable. The queen is gone this afternoon to reside at Windsor. I think to stay here for some time, and only go to attend the queen on Saturdays and Sundays. I beseech you to believe, that I will do every thing, which may shew with how real and great respect and deference, I am," &c.

These advances from the new lord treasurer, and his ardent professions of zeal, induced Marlborough to adopt a similar tone of cordiality, and to communicate to him a project for the purpose of accelerating the termination of the war. Finding from the diminution of his army, by the separation of the imperialists, that he could not conduct his operations on the scale originally concerted, he formed a plan commensurate with his means, and likely to be no less

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 363.

effective. The scheme is only partially explained in the letters still extant; but from the correspondence which passed on the subject, it appears to have comprised the capture of Bouchain and Quesnoy, before the close of the campaign. The army was then to continue on the frontier during winter, and being rejoined by the imperialists, to anticipate the enemy in the field, in the ensuing spring. The speedy fall of Arras or Cambray was expected from these early operations, and the combined armies, having no longer any fortress to withstand their progress, might penetrate into the heart of France, and dictate terms of peace under the walls of Paris.

To the Lord Treasurer.

"*July* 4.— Your lordship's last letters, which I have already acknowledged, give me so much encouragement to correspond with you for the future in terms of confidence and friendship, that I cannot but offer to you such thoughts relating to the service, as occur to me in looking forward at this time of inaction.

"The enemy have brought forward a large train of artillery, with all sorts of ammunition and other necessaries for a siege, to Cambray, and are actually erecting magazines there, and at Valenciennes and Bouchain. This can be to no other end than to have it in their power to attack Douay, at the time we shall be obliged to leave the field for want of forage.

"It has cost me some time to consider of the means effectually to prevent this design, and to annoy the enemy at the same time, which I think is only to be done by keeping the greatest part of the army in this country all the winter, which will oblige the enemy to do the same at an infinitely greater expense; and we shall be in a condition to take the field so early, that they will not be able to hinder our attacking either Arras or Cambray, as may be thought for the good of the common cause. If the project I am framing upon this foundation shall be approved by the queen and the States, I cannot but hope it may prove the means of obliging the French king to think of making fresh offers of peace this winter. But as there will be many points in it, which require to be explained in a more ample manner than can well be done by writing; if you think it deserves your attention, I will, as soon as I receive your answer, send over Lord Stair, as fully instructed in every thing that concerns the project, as he is already acquainted with my sincere desire to live with you in the strictest friendship that may be. In the meantime, I shall not mention a word of this matter to any other person living, the secrecy of the project being of the greatest importance."

Reply of the Treasurer.

"*July* 6.— My lord; I received from the hands of Lord Mar, just as I came from Windsor, the honour of your grace's letter, and I am not

willing to let a post pass, without making your grace my acknowledgments. It is most certain, that you can best judge what is fit to be proposed upon the subject you are pleased to mention, and you are extremely in the right to send a person, who may be able to explain, by word of mouth, your grace's thoughts. You give the necessary caution, that it be kept secret, and I doubt not but your grace will find a sufficient excuse for that lord's coming over, which may amuse the world. I do assure your grace, that I shall not communicate this to any person, but whom the queen shall direct me to tell it to. I hope those who must know it amongst the States may observe the same caution.

"I hope it will be needless to renew the assurances to your grace, that I will not omit any thing in my power, which may testify my zeal for the public, and my particular honour and esteem for your grace; and I doubt not, but when the lord you mention comes, I shall satisfy him of the sincerity of my intentions towards your grace. I believe you are well informed of the address of the House of Commons to the queen, to send commissioners to Spain, Portugal, &c., to examine the condition of the army. Flanders was left out of the address by your well-wishers, and, though I will not trouble you with long accounts, I cannot forbear telling your grace, that there is already actually issued to June 26th, out of this year's funds, to Mr. Bridges, for all the forces under his pay, two million six hundred thirty-six thousand seven hundred thirty-seven pounds, five shillings and three pence, which will still make it more reasonable to have the remainder applied to the most important services. Your grace will have heard that Mr. Vryberg is dead; I hope the States will find a proper person to succeed him. This morning the duke of Queensberry died; a third secretary is so new a thing in England, and so much out of the way of doing business here, that it ought to be put upon some other foot, if the queen shall think fit to have any one succeed him. I beseech your grace to accept the assurance that I am," &c.

Receiving a letter replete with expressions of confidence and zeal from Harley, the general repaired to the quarters of Lord Stair, who was confined with an ague. To this zealous friend he imparted his designs, in a long conversation. He dwelt with regret on the unfortunate situation of the grand confederacy, and expressed his apprehensions, lest the blood and treasure which had been expended to reduce the exorbitant power of France should be sacrificed in vain, if he continued to command the army, after having lost the favour of the sovereign, and the confidence of her ministers. Two expedients, he added, only remained, to remedy this misfortune. The first, that he should be permitted to resign his command, to one more agreeable to the queen and ministry, who might pursue the objects of the grand alliance, till the war was ended, with equal advantage and glory. He

declared he should then return with cheerfulness to a private station, and employ his prayers and influence in behalf of his successor. The second expedient was, to offer to continue at the head of the army, provided he could regain the confidence of the queen, and live with the lord treasurer on the same friendly terms as he had done with Lord Godolphin. With these offers was connected a more perfect development of his project, which Lord Stair was commissioned to communicate in person to the lord treasurer.*

The answer of the treasurer will exhibit the manner in which this communication was received.

"*Aug.* 4. —" Saturday morning I received the honour of your grace's letter from my Lord Stair, and I do assure your grace, that I will never do any thing which shall forfeit your good opinion; and I hope to have an opportunity of a farther conversation with my Lord Stair on that head, that he may return sufficiently instructed to give your grace satisfaction on all points. On Sunday Lord Stair attended the queen, and delivered your grace's letter and the other papers yesterday morning, by the queen's command. The duke of Shrewsbury, Mr. Secretary, and myself, had a conference with my lord, who fully explained all the particulars; and we have agreed to make as good an estimate as we can, by the rule of the present contracts, though that will be far from being exact, and by Sunday next to lay it before the queen for her approbation. One great point we debated was, how to preserve the secret, and particularly when it comes to be asked of the elector of Hanover about his troops; but that is not what is first to be done. I shall have the honour to acquaint your grace with the steps taken herein from time to time. I hope the pensionary will find some proper expedient to prevent the dangers threatened from the north; and now that we hear the king of Prussia is like to accommodate matters, certainly it were worth trying to soften the king of Denmark. I believe Lord Peterborough will go in a few days, to be at the election of the emperor. The queen will also speedily name an arbitrator to go to Milan, to settle matters between the duke of Savoy and the court of Vienna. I am told, just now, that there is some alteration in the distribution of the money to pay the army, that Mr. Sweet† is not upon the same foot he was; I do assure your grace I never heard a word of it until this moment; and I shall send for Mr. Bridges to-morrow to know the meaning of it. I beseech your grace to believe me to be with the greatest respect," &c.

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* This interesting anecdote is related in a curious letter from Lord Stair to Lord Marchmont, dated Edinburgh, Dec. 10. 1734, and communicated to me by the late right honourable G. Rose. It is likewise printed in his Remarks on Mr. Fox's History of James II.

† Agent for the Duke of Marlborough and for the paymaster of the forces, residing in Holland.

Chap. CII. — Movements of the Campaign. — 1711.

Impressed with the importance of his project, and encouraged by the approbation of the queen and minister, Marlborough prepared to avail himself of his central situation and resources, by effecting the primary object in view, the investment of Bouchain.

This, however, was an enterprise of no small difficulty; for he must previously break through the boasted lines of Villars, and traverse the Scarpe and the Sanzet, with such secrecy and promptitude, as again to elude the vigilance and activity of his enterprising antagonist. This undertaking, however, he could not venture to propose in a council of war, from a conviction that he should never obtain the consent of the generals and Dutch deputies to make an attempt of so much difficulty and danger. But he was not deterred by these considerations, and he hoped, in the course of its gradual accomplishment, to place his army in a situation, where retreat would be perilous, and attack impracticable, and thus to extort from the cautious council their sanction for his ultimate operations. In the execution of this design he developed that sublimity of military talent which has justly stamped this campaign as not the least scientific and glorious in his whole career.

During his encampment at Lewarde, he had observed that the triangular portion of ground, comprised between Cambray, Aubanchoeil-au-bac, and the confluence of the Sanzet and Scheldt, offered a position so strong, that a small force could maintain it against a superior enemy. As long, however, as the French held the redoubt at Aubigny, and the works about Arleux, this object could not be accomplished; and, therefore, as a preliminary operation, these posts were immediately attacked. Aubigny was carried without much difficulty, and its loss appeared to create no alarm among the enemy, as their attention was principally fixed on Arleux. To prevent their permanent occupation of this important post, Marlborough recurred to a masterly stratagem. He was aware, that if he took it, the enemy would recapture it, as soon as his army should remove to a distance, and that they would be more intent on its preservation, because it

commanded the current of the waters, and enabled them to impede the arrival of supplies. He therefore resolved to play on the impatient and lively imagination of the French marshal; first, by taking the post, to show that he could capture it when he pleased; and, secondly, by enlarging and fortifying it, to delude him into the belief that he considered it of importance in a defensive view. These measures he expected would impel Villars to retake it, as soon as the allied army withdrew, and then finding the works extensive, and the allies menacing an attack with all their forces in another quarter, that he would recal his troops to meet the attempt, and demolish a post which his antagonist appeared to value.*

For the execution of this stratagem, a detachment of 700 men, with cannon, marched from Douay; and at night, the duke suddenly turned out the piquet of the army, and moved to the heights in front of Sailly and L'Ecluse, to mask the attack, which was conducted with such spirit, that the redoubt and water-mill were forced, and 120 prisoners taken, before Villars, who hastened to the relief, could arrive. No time was lost in strengthening the redoubt, by a double ditch and palisades, and by mounting eight pieces of cannon and two mortars. Rantzau, who had been left with 12 battalions and 10 squadrons, to cover the working party, deeming the post sufficiently secure, retired with his principal officers to Douay; and Villars, having personally reconnoitred the camp, seized this favourable moment to surprise it, by the circuitous route of Bouchain. On the night of the 9th, the attempt was made in considerable force, by a combined attack on the side of Bouchain, and on that of the French camp, directed by Villars in person; and, though it failed in the main object, it spread alarm through the allied lines, by the slaughter of some sleeping troopers, the capture of 200 prisoners, several hundred horses, a considerable booty, and the disgrace inseparable from a nightly surprise. The allied garrison still retained possession of Arleux, and the covering army remained in its general position, altering only the form of the encampment.

Marlborough appeared to evince great mortification at this

* Kane's Memoirs, p. 89. This experienced tactician has ably developed the views of the great commander in this stratagem.

dishonour to his arms; but as his stratagem was now matured, he soon afterwards called in the detachment, and, on the 20th, broke up from his position. Thus adroitly leaving Arleux to its fate, he marched by his right in the direction of Bethune, placing his troops between Gosnay and Mezengarde, and establishing his head-quarters at the Chartreuse. The next day he resumed his march to Cotenes, his right occupying Etrée Blanche, on the Quelle, his centre being posted at Auchin, and his left at Bouvrière, on the Clairance.

This change of position induced Villars to make a parallel movement. He brought his left, on the 21st, beyond Sambrin; his right was at La Cour des Bois, near Arras; and his front extended behind his formidable lines, with a detached corps at the abbey of Cercamp, on the left bank of the Canche. But before he took his departure, he detached a corps of 16 battalions, and as many squadrons, to carry Arleux, and, after the capture, to join D'Estaing, who was left on the lines near the Sambre, for the purpose of making a diversion on the side of Brabant. Marshal Montesquiou, at the head of the attacking corps, appeared before Arleux, at day-break on the 23rd, and, after a short cannonade, his grenadiers took it by storm, capturing 500 prisoners, with the loss of 80 men killed and wounded. He garrisoned it with 800 men, and stationed six battalions at Pallue to sustain them.

Villars was greatly elated with these trifling advantages; while Marlborough concealed his hopes, by an affected display of chagrin and mortification, under the pretence that his enemies would impute his want of success to his variance with the ministers, to the absence of Eugene, or to inability of coping singly with his able antagonist. He suddenly changed his usual demeanour of courtesy and affability, assumed the appearance of spleen and moroseness, and secluded himself in his tent. He declared to those who had access to his person, that he would attack the enemy at all hazards, and revenge the insult which his army had recently sustained. At this moment he had the satisfaction to learn that Villars had ordered his troops to evacuate Arleux, and demolish the fortifications. He still affected, however, to entertain great apprehensions lest D'Estaing should make an irruption into Brabant, and declared that he must advance

to cover that province. He therefore sent Lord Albemarle, with 12 battalions and 26 squadrons, to Bethune, and went in person to reconnoitre the position of the hostile army towards Villers Brulin and Aubigny. On learning that D'Estaing had moved towards Brabant, he made no change in his dispositions, but despatched Generals Ammama and Chanclos to Brussels, and, on the 30th, gave orders to Lord Albemarle to be in readiness to join him on his intended march.

We find two letters to Lord Godolphin, written during these movements, in which he announces his resolution of engaging the enemy, provided a favourable opportunity should occur; and refers for particulars to Dr. Garth, who had paid him a visit in the camp, on account of his precarious state of health.

"*July* 26.— This day, on our march, I received the favour of your two letters of the 29th of the last month and the 3d of this. You may be very well assured that my inclinations are, at this time, for a battle, believing it to be the interest of the common cause, as well as for mine own honour, to be at this time ventured; for though the enemy be stronger than we, yet, as the humours of the northern powers are, God knows how long we may be able to keep the troops we have now with us. This, I fear, is so well known to the French, that I apprehend they will not be willing to venture on this side of their lines; and if they had any intention of fighting, our last camp was a very proper place, and we continued in it five weeks, which is very near a demonstration that their intention is not to make use of their superiority by venturing a battle, at least not till towards the end of the campaign; so that the consequences then may not be so great as they might otherwise be when there might be time to act in."

"*July* 30.— Doctor Garth intending to leave us to-morrow, I shall not give you any trouble by this night's post. He will acquaint you with our situation, as also of my own health, which, if I could have a little quiet, I might hope to live some few years longer.

"The Marshal de Villars has sent 20 squadrons and 17 battalions into Brabant. On the first notice I have reinforced the garrisons of Bruxelles and Mons, for those people are ill inclined to us. I shall march the army on Saturday, and if I can see any hopes of success, I shall attack them. As to the lending of money, the doctor will let you know that whatever you think right, I shall agree to it."

Meanwhile Villars continued to increase the defences on the plain in his front; and, confiding in the strength of his position, and of his forces, he wrote to the king of France the celebrated letter for which he was so much ridiculed, boasting

that at length he had brought Marlborough to his *ne plus ultra*.

The heavy baggage of the allies having already been sent off on the 28th, under the escort of General Wood, with four battalions and twelve squadrons, in the direction of Douay, bread for six days was clandestinely baked and forwarded from Lille, and the train of artillery was removed from the camp, under a proper guard. Thus disencumbered, Marlborough broke up at four in the morning of the 1st of August, and marched in eight columns to the front, by roads and bridges previously prepared. His left halted at Pont de Rebreuve, in front of Houdain, his centre at Dieval, and the right near Belval, behind the woods of St. Pol, where he was rejoined by Lord Albemarle. Detachments were again ostentatiously ordered forward, to clear the roads in the direction of the hostile left. Although several corps had quitted the camp, the object of these marches and counter-marches had not been ascertained by Villars; and it had been industriously divulged that the British general had called in all his detachments. After these menacing manœuvres, Villars, no longer doubting that he was about to be attacked in his strong post, concentrated all his forces, recalling his distant garrisons, and even, among others, the troops that had been left at Pallue, in the vicinity of Arleux.

Early next morning Marlborough again moved to the front, and halted between Villers Brulin and Betonsart, his left encamping near the wood of Villers aux Bois, and the right about Bailleul. The cavalry were instantly ordered to collect fascines of small dimensions, so as not to fatigue the infantry when marching to the attack. On the evening of the 3d, Brigadier Sutton, at the head of a strong detachment, left the camp with all the field-artillery, excepting four pieces, and with the pontoons and remaining baggage, including even the last carriage of the general. At day-light of the 4th, Marlborough, attended by most of the general officers, went out to reconnoitre, escorted by the grenadiers of the army, under Brigadier Durell, and eighty squadrons of cavalry, the whole camp remaining under arms in front of the position. He rode along the lines, within range of cannon-shot, and in full view of the anxious enemy, stopping at intervals, and pointing with his cane to different parts of

their front, while he explained to the several commanders the direction of the columns which each was to lead to the pretended attack. "This," to use the expression of an eye-witness, "he spoke openly in the hearing of all about him, and, as it were, with a confidence of success; when, at the same time, every one with him was surprised at this rash and dangerous undertaking, and believed it proceeded from the affront which Villars had put upon him, and the ill-treatment he had of late received from the queen and the ministry, which had now made him desperate." * Marlborough then returned to camp, and gave orders to prepare for battle.

The deep-laid plan was now ripe for execution. Villars was in the toils, and the state of the weather promised the advantage of a full moon and cloudless sky for the intended march. While all were in anxious expectation, Cadogan privately quitted the camp, attended only by forty hussars. In the French lines hope was raised to the highest pitch, and the disgraces of many campaigns were at last expected to be obliterated by a splendid victory. Among the allies, gloom hung on every countenance; reduced by various detachments, and destitute of artillery, it appeared madness to attack an enemy superior in numbers, and intrenched behind lines bristling with cannon. Yet the long-tried confidence of the troops in the skill of their great chief still excited hopes that he had measures in reserve of which they could not penetrate the plan. At length the dusk of evening began to spread, the tattoo beat, and before the ruffle of the drums had ceased orders passed along the line to strike the tents. At the same time instructions were issued that officers would be sent to conduct the columns to their destination. Meanwhile a corps of light cavalry engaged the attention of the enemy on their left, by sweeping rapidly round Sart-le-bois-Sacé and Houvigneul, and then returning towards the camp. A little before nine the lines facing to the left silently filed off, in four columns, through the woods of Villers aux Bois, Neuville, Theluche, and Gaverelle, with such expedition, that before five in the morning of the 5th they reached the bank of the Scarpe, near Vitry, where they found pontoons already prepared for their passage, and the

* This interesting detail is taken from General Kane, who was present in the army. — *Kane's Memoirs*, p. 92.

field-artillery, which had been conducted by Brigadier Sutton. During the march the duke led the van, at the head of 50 squadrons of the left wing. At break of day an express, despatched by Cadogan, reached him, with intelligence that he and General Hompesch had crossed the causeway without opposition, at Aubanchoeil-au-bac, about three in the morning, and *were in actual possession* of the enemy's lines, with 22 battalions and 2000 horse, composed partly of the detachments previously sent from the camp, and partly from garrisons in the rear. The general received the welcome intelligence while in the act of leading the van of the horse, in anxious expectation. He instantly sent orders to every regiment of infantry to accelerate their march, and, to the right wing of horse, which closed the rear, to bring up the fatigued and stragglers, and pushed on at a trot with his 50 squadrons to join Cadogan. The news spreading rapidly through the columns, all were animated with fresh ardour, and even the lukewarm and envious could not restrain their admiration.

About eleven at night Villars received the first intelligence of their rapid march; but was so completely confused by the complicated movements of his great antagonist, that he still confidently anticipated an immediate engagement. He considered the march only as a manœuvre preparatory to a vigorous attack either upon his lines at Avesne le Compte, or on his left, where the alarm excited by the corps of light cavalry that had swept round Sacé in the evening had induced Marshal Montesquiou, who commanded that wing, to send notice that he was menaced with an attack in the morning. Uncertain what to expect, he kept his troops under arms, in readiness for marching. At two in the morning, more specific intelligence arriving, the French marshal put himself at the head of the household troops, who were with him on the right, and, pushing on at full speed, ordered the infantry to follow without delay.

In the mean time Marlborough had reached the important post, Aubanchoeil-au-bac before eight in the morning, where his field-train had arrived; and as his cavalry rapidly passed the Sanzet, he placed them in order of battle on the opposite side of the river. When sufficient numbers had formed, he extended his right towards the abbey du Verger. Other

bridges were laid across the river at Pallue, by means of which the right wing of infantry and cavalry had a shorter route to the new position. The outposts advanced to the morass of Marquion, and masked the defile of Saulchy.

During these arrangements, Villars advanced with such rapidity that he gradually dropped his corps of cavalry, till scarcely one hundred of the best mounted remained. Mortified by disappointment, and impatient to know the real state of affairs, he pushed through the defile of Saulchy without the necessary precautions, and was soon surrounded by the allied outposts. Perceiving their intention to charge, he directed the dragoons to fly to the castle of Oisy, and while the allies pursued them, he, with two attendants only, escaped through an opening unheeded. The escort surrendered without firing a shot. In this extremity he met 20 squadrons coming up to the defile. It was now ten in the morning, and the head of his right wing of cavalry was approaching; but by this time the columns of the allied infantry were perceived marching in a parallel direction, on the other side of the Sanzet, and soon afterwards turning into the pass of Arleux, and crossing the river at Pallue. At eleven, a considerable body had formed line, stretching from Oisy towards Espinoy. Notwithstanding the numbers who sunk from fatigue, in a forced march of sixteen hours, over an extent of thirty-six miles, intersected by several rivers, the right wing of the allied infantry had entered the new ground by four in the afternoon; and before dark the whole position was occupied from Oisy to beyond the mill of Abancourt, towards the Scheldt.

About this period, the first infantry of the French army, in five columns, approaching, Villars halted them in rear of the defile, and, on the morning of the 6th, turned off the great road towards Bourlon, and began likewise to place his troops in order of battle, with the right on the Scheldt, behind Cambray, the centre in the wood of Bourlon, and the left at the marsh of Sains sur Marquion.

By his masterly movements, Marlborough had now accomplished his great design.* Villars was severely mortified; he could not prevent the siege of either Cambray, Bouchain, or Valenciennes, unless he took post behind the right bank of

* Hist. des Guerres de la Revolution, tom. i.

the Scheldt, towards Bouchain, from whence he could succour the one or the other; but by this movement he uncovered Arras, a place of still greater importance. Overreached in military skill, he endeavoured to foil one stratagem by another, and lure Marlborough to a battle, by drawing him round the cannon of Cambray. But his opponent would not fall into the snare; for as he had gained his object without a battle, a victory could bring little advantage, and he was enabled to carry into effect the remainder of his plan without obstruction.

The Dutch deputies, who had hitherto always deprecated a battle, were now urgent for an attack, and the disaffected were, or pretended to be, alarmed at the consequences of so bold and rapid a movement; but Marlborough was not to be diverted by clamours or importunities, and firmly waited the arrival of the fatigued troops and rear guard. Being apprised that the enemy were moving from their first position to that of Bourlon, he conjectured that Villars would cross the Scheldt, in order to frustrate his ulterior operation. He therefore summoned a council of war, and unfolded the remainder of his plan; he composed the alarms of the timid, and restrained the rashness of those who advised an immediate attack in the exhausted state of the army. Villars, he urged, was moved to a field so contracted and covered, that no attempt could be made either on his flanks or centre without the risk of utter defeat. He added, should he withdraw behind the Scheldt, the only operation which could be undertaken would be the siege of Arras, a fortress too strong and extensive to be reduced with a limited force; and therefore he proposed the investment of Bouchain, pledging himself to pass the Scheldt, and accomplish the enterprise. The same persons, indeed, who wished to risk a hazardous battle, combated this prudent resolution; but he had given so many and such recent proofs of his superiority in skill and judgment, that the whole council acquiesced in his opinion.

At the rising of the council, therefore, the army advanced almost within cannon-shot in front of Cambray, and halted about noon; and this movement had the effect of preventing Villars from attempting, as he had meditated, the passage of the Scheldt. While the enemy were held in check, eight pontoon bridges were expeditiously thrown across the river

below Etrun, and the whole army facing to the left, occasionally saluted by the cannon of Cambray, marched by lines along the heights, their rear being covered with all the grenadiers, and forty squadrons, under General Ross. At six, the left wing began to cross the river; the rear guard, which occupied the heights, and the grenadiers, posted in Etrun and the Roman camp, near the village, frustrated the attempts of the enemy to obstruct the movement. Convinced that the allied forces would have crossed the river before the morning, Villars remained quietly in his camp, and suffered them, without molestation, to proceed to the investment of Bouchain, which he hoped to be able to relieve.

These masterly manœuvres excited the admiration of all candid and competent judges, and we find a few lines of congratulation from Eugene: "I received yesterday evening your highness's letter of the 6th instant. You are fully convinced, I trust, that no person takes a greater interest in your concerns than myself. Your highness has penetrated into the *non plus ultra*.* I sincerely hope that the siege of Bouchain, contrary to the custom of our engineers, will not last long. If Marshal Villars has the consent of his court, perhaps he will make his appearance in the field; but as he has taken his position, I do not think he will attack you. If he can make any diversion, he will not fail to attempt it; but it will be difficult. From hence I have nothing to communicate, except that the rains and inundations detain me in this camp without forage."

Notwithstanding the extraordinary success which the great commander had obtained with such limited means, his conduct

* Even Bolingbroke admitted that this bloodless triumph of Marlborough rivalled his greatest achievements. In a letter to the duke, dated July 31st, which Mr. Coxe has omitted to quote, he says, —

"My Lord Stair opened to us the general steps which your grace intended to take, in order to pass the lines in one part or another. It was, however, hard to imagine, and too much to hope, that a plan, which consisted of so many parts, wherein so many different corps were to cooperate personally together, should entirely succeed, and no one article fail of what your grace had projected. I most heartily congratulate your grace on this great event, of which I think no more needs be said, than that you have obtained, without losing a man, such an advantage, as we should have been glad to have purchased with the loss of several thousand lives." — *Marlborough Despatches*, v. 429. — Ed.

did not escape censure, not merely from his enemies and detractors, but even from some of his well-wishers, who were incompetent judges of the art of war. The pensionary, deceived by the reports of the Dutch deputies, blamed his timidity, in not risking an engagement; and from the court of Vienna similar complaints were heard.

It could not be expected that among the British ministers, who were interested to decry his exploits, such an opportunity for cavil should be lost; and, therefore, we find St. John inquiring of Cadogan the reasons which induced the general to decline an engagement, and, in his correspondence with Drummond, peevishly observing, "My spirit is not damped by this *contre-tems*, if such it was; I only apprehend that before the siege of Bouchain is over we may be obliged to fight at greater disadvantage than we might have done in the course of the late event."*

Marlborough, vexed at these unjust imputations, vindicated his conduct in a letter to the secretary, which is preserved in the State Paper Office, and printed in Somerville.† At the same time, he sent a similar justification to his friend, Count Zinzendorf, for the satisfaction of the court of Vienna.

"*Camp before Bouchain, Aug.* 20. — In reply, sir, to your inquiry into the motives which induced me not to engage the enemy, I could answer in one word, *impossibility*. But, in compliance with your wishes, I have the honour to inform you, that the same day in which we passed the lines, Marshal Villars appeared at the head of his army, behind the morass of Marquion. He encamped there that night, and the next day continued his march, in four columns, towards Cambray, covered by the marsh which extends to the village of Inchy, a league and a half from Cambray; so that his troops, passing the village, formed on the right towards that town, behind the villages of Sailly and Rolencourt, and the hollow roads and ravines with which the country abounds. His right thus rested on Cambray, his centre was covered by those two villages, with the hollow roads, and his left by the marsh of Inchy. Hence you see, that in this situation it was impracticable for us to attack him, and we had no other measures to take than first to pass the Scheldt, lest he should anticipate us, by crossing and taking post on the other side, in our front, by which movement we should have been deprived of all the advantage of our passage of the lines, and should have been obliged to retrograde by the way

* Aug. 7. 1711, vol. i. p. 298.

† Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 646. We have not deemed it necessary to print this letter, because the arguments are exactly similar to those in his epistle to Count Zinzendorf.

we came, after consuming the little forage which that corner afforded. I might add to what is stated in the Paris Gazette of the 14th, under the head of Cambray, in which it is pretended that a heavy rain prevented the battle on the 6th, that we profited by the darkness of the ensuing night to pass the Scheldt, and that Count Broglio was detached to occupy the post of Denain; — I say in answer to these fictions, that not a drop of rain fell on the army during the whole day, nor until night; that our bridges were made over the Scheldt at eleven in the morning, and the army was on the march by two in the afternoon, the greater part having passed before dark. With regard to the post of Denain, we occupied it in the first instance, and have since kept it, nor have the enemy made the slightest attempt to dislodge us. You thus see what credit is to be given to this common rumour; and if any one among us has given rise to it, this must have been for want of being better informed.

"God be thanked, we have succeeded in closing the communication between the army of M. Villars and the town of Bouchain, and in two or three days we shall open the trenches."*

Marlborough had the satisfaction to find that his arguments weighed with the court of Vienna, and drew from Zinzendorf a candid avowal that he had been misled by erroneous statements. He was no less gratified to learn that his explanation had removed the unfavourable impressions entertained by Secretary St. John, who paid a candid and honourable tribute to the merit of the great commander, in a letter to his friend Mr. Drummond: "I look upon the progress which the Duke of Marlborough has lately made to be really honourable to him, and mortifying to the enemy. The event cannot be ascribed to superior numbers, or to any accident; it is owing to genius and conduct. The present situation of the army seems to promise a decisive action."

CHAP. CIII. — INVESTMENT OF BOUCHAIN. — 1711.

HAVING thus baffled the defensive combinations of the enemy, and anticipated them in the passage of the Scheldt, the next object was to complete the investment of Bouchain, an enterprise of no less difficulty than the preceding move-

* Translation from the French original, in the possession of Count Zinzerdorf, communicated by the Archduke John.

ments, as it was to be accomplished amidst local obstacles of no ordinary kind, and in face of an army superior in force.

At ten at night, the left wing of infantry, which closed the line of march, crossed the Scheldt, over pontoons taken from the enemy by surprise. The weather changing in the evening, the troops were drenched in rain, but, soon after midnight, reached the plain of Avesnes le Sec, and lay under arms till morning; while a strong piquet was posted at the mill of Ivry, to watch the motions of the enemy. About eight the active general roused his benumbed and shivering soldiers; and continuing his march by the left, formed in order of battle on the plain stretching from Douchy to Haspres, the left and centre covered by the Selle, and the right thrown back in rear of Houdain. All the posts on the Sanzet were recalled, and a body of grenadiers alone left in the camp of Cæsar, on the left of the Scheldt, to cover three bridges which still remained. At six in the evening, being threatened by a strong detachment of hostile cavalry, this force was also withdrawn, and a body of infantry, advancing on the opposite side of the river, amused the enemy with a heavy cannonade, while the pontoons were removed.

In this manner was Bouchain invested; yet obstacles of no trivial nature were still to be overcome. The Sanzet divides the town into two parts, and, in conjunction with the Scheldt, which skirts a large hornwork towards the east, produces a copious inundation, filling the ditches, which are both broad and deep. The enemy, posted between the Sanzet and Scheldt, could either introduce supplies through the inundation, or, by traversing the Sanzet, could maintain a communication with the place on the west. The original garrison, of eight battalions, commanded by M. de Selve, was reinforced by 600 Swiss, who, under Count d'Affry, traversed the inundation in the night, and by a second body of 500 grenadiers, under M. de Ravignon. Money and ammunition sufficient for the defence was also introduced. On the 6th preparations were made by Villars for throwing bridges across the Sanzet, at Aubanchoeil and Wannes; and, having called reinforcements from St. Omer, Ypres, and other quarters, he moved to the very ground which the allies had just quitted. Here he pitched camp, in the angle between the Sanzet and the Scheldt; his centre was placed at Etrun,

while his left extended along the Sanzet to Tressis, and his right along the Scheldt to Neuville St. Remy, on the glacis of Cambray.

Marlborough did not allow the enemy time to profit by the advantages of their situation; for he had no sooner reached Avesnes le Sec than he ordered bridges to be thrown across the Scheldt, at Neuville, below Bouchain; and passing over with 60 squadrons, took post on the hill of Vignonette, near Wannes-au-bac. He thus covered the convoy of baggage and bread waggons, which, under an escort of 2000 horse, commanded by General Wood, was safely conducted from Douay, and anticipated the preparations of the enemy to establish themselves on the farther bank of the Sanzet.

Villars, however, appreciated too well the advantage of a double communication with the town, to desist from his purpose. Before daylight of the 9th, he detached 30 battalions across the Sanzet, under the command of General Albergotti, who immediately began to construct an intrenchment, which was to commence from the inundation at Wavrechin, and forming an angle on the top of the hill above Marquette, to be carried back to the Sanzet at Wannes-au-bac. This work and the batteries of Bouchain would sweep the intermediate ground with a cross fire.

Marlborough was fully aware that the enemy, if suffered to accomplish their undertaking, would effectually mar his design. He therefore selected 31 battalions and 12 squadrons to complete the investment, under General Fagel; and detached General Collier, and Lord North and Grey, with 42 squadrons and 30 battalions, across the Scheldt, in the night, to interrupt the operations of the enemy. A thick fog covered the advance of this body till near seven in the morning, when they had approached within cannon-shot of the hostile intrenchments. A signal of three guns was then fired upon an outpost in the village of Marquette, which immediately retired, and the allies approached the works. Lord North and Grey, who led the van, was on the point of advancing to the attack, when the commander-in chief, who had himself traversed the Scheldt before daylight, rode forward, and ordered a halt. He had fortunately discovered a large body of infantry concealed behind the height, and

soon ascertained that Montesquiou, with 60 battalions, had been secretly detached by Villars to sustain Albergotti, who was acquainted with the intended enterprise.

At this moment an alarm of another kind was given, by signal guns fired from the great camp at Avesnes le Sec; for Villars, adroitly profiting by the division of the allied forces, had crossed the Scheldt, with the rest of his army, near Ramilies, and advancing to the ravine of Naves, began to extend his line along the rivulet near Ivry. Thus menaced, and baffled on both points, the British general was compelled to relinquish his purpose; and ordering the troops to withdraw, with all speed, from the fire of the intrenchment, which now opened, he returned in haste to the camp beyond the Scheldt. Villars having foiled his antagonist, resumed likewise his former position.

Marlborough was sensible that he could not accomplish his purpose while his camp beyond the Scheldt was exposed. He therefore ordered the front from Haspres to Ivry to be covered by a line of redoubts and lunettes, which were mounted with cannon. This work being completed in two days, he again crossed the Scheldt with 50 battalions and 52 squadrons. Perceiving that the enemy were rapidly improving and extending their works, he ordered the line of circumvallation to be immediately commenced in the middle space between their intrenchments and the town. Accordingly, 4000 workmen were employed during the night of the 11th in constructing a line which began at Mastaigne, and stretched to the right, across the road from Valenciennes, towards the Lower Scheldt. Behind, a competent force, under General Collier and Lord North and Grey, encamped for their protection.

Having prescribed the direction of the lines, Marlborough left the superintendence to General Cadogan, under whose inspection it was carried on by Colonel Armstrong, deputy-quarter-master, with equal ability and success. The ensuing morning was marked by a memorable occurrence. Cadogan, riding to reconnoitre at the head of a few squadrons, perceived Marshal Villars, who, with an escort of four squadrons of carabineers, and one of hussars, was advancing for the same purpose. A warm skirmish ensuing between the two parties, the carabineers were routed, with the loss of a bri-

gadier, the major, and above 50 troopers, and the marshal himself with difficulty escaped.

The day was employed in completing and carrying the line of circumvallation on the right, towards Lorche, on the Lower Scheldt. At night, Colonel Armstrong silently advanced with a strong escort to the height above Marquette, and commenced a new work across the road from Bouchain to Douay, intending to continue it to the Upper Scheldt, between the enemy's post and Bouchain. He proceeded without interruption; but at daylight he discovered that Albergotti had endeavoured to anticipate him by commencing three redoubts between Wavrechin and the town. The duke, who was apprised of the circumstance, instantly ordered a detachment of infantry, with 20 pieces of cannon, to dislodge the enemy, and, to prevent farther interruption, reinforced the troops beyond the Scheldt to 70 battalions and 100 squadrons. At night, notwithstanding a heavy fire, both from the town and the hostile intrenchments, the circumvallation was continued to the inundation of the Sanzet, including the unfinished redoubts taken from the enemy. The obstructions encountered in these preliminary operations alarmed the Dutch deputies, and they now pressed for the relinquishment of the siege with as much earnestness as they had recently displayed for an ill-timed engagement. To their appeal we find an illusion in a letter to Godolphin.

"*Aug.* 13. — I desired Lady Marlborough to make my excuses for not writing by the last post, to thank you for yours of the 23d. The increase of the enemy's army, by their draining their garrisons from all places, as also recalling the troops they had sent under the command of the count d'Estaing, into Brabant, gives them so great a superiority, that the deputies thought it proper to advise with their general how far it might be practicable to persist in the attempting the siege of Bouchain. The greatest number of them thought the difficulties we should meet with could hardly be overcome. However, we are taking the necessary steps for the siege; we are intrenching ourselves, as the enemy do on their side, so that should we, as I hope in God we shall, succeed, it still will be a very tedious work, if we can be so happy as to be masters of this place."

"14*th*. — Having wrote thus far, I was informed of the marshal de Villars being come out of his intrenchments with a considerable body of horse and foot, and that he was working at three redoubts, in order to have communication with Bouchain from his retrenchment. It was dark before I could get near him, so that he had the advantage of working all

night; but as soon as day broke, and he saw we were in earnest to attack him, he quitted his three redoubts, and retired into his retrenchments. I think he may again attempt the same thing this night, so that I am going to bed, in hopes of getting some sleep."

Foiled in the struggle beyond the Sanzet, Villars became doubly anxious to maintain his communication with the garrison, through the inundation. For this purpose, he had raised a battery at Etrun to command a part of the adjoining morass. On the 10th, he introduced a reinforcement of 200 fusileers, who filed along a small dam between the two rivers; and, during the night, 400 sacks of flour and a quantity of ammunition were thrown into the town by the same channel. He now endeavoured to fortify this communication by means of fascines laid in the form of a breast-work, attached to an avenue of willow-trees, which skirted the dam, although the water was in many places four feet deep.

On the morning of the 15th the enemy were still discovered at work; and, notwithstanding a heavy cross-fire from both banks, they persevered in their labours. Behind the dam was a cattle track, called *Le Sentier aux Vaches*, which was raised with fascines wherever the water was deep, and barred by a small traverse in the centre. To protect this work, a corps of troops was posted on the verge of the morass.

The persevering activity of the British general did not long leave even this resource to his opponent. On the 16th a fascine road was commenced across the morass, by the joint labours of the troops on both sides of the two rivers; and, in the evening, 600 British and Dutch grenadiers, sustained by eight battalions of infantry, under the direction of Cadogan, resolutely advanced against four companies of French grenadiers, who were stationed on the Cow-path, and supported by the brigade Du Roi. This daring band waded several hundred yards up to the middle, and sometimes to the shoulders, in water, without firing a shot; and, after receiving a volley from the enemy, carried the post with the loss of only six men. On this occasion, a young ensign of the regiment of Ingolsby distinguished himself; for, being short of stature, and unable to ford the water, he mounted on the shoulders of a grenadier, and, with his gallant supporter, was among the first to reach the traverse. Two companies

of French grenadiers were intercepted and driven into Bouchain, and the allies secured their advantage by carrying a breast-work, and completing the road, about a mile in length, across the inundation, from camp to camp.

On the 19th, several sallies made by the besieged were repulsed, and the next day the investment was completed. On the 21st, the heavy battering trains and stores arrived from Tournay, under a strong escort, after repelling a spirited attack near St. Amand from the garrisons of Condé and Valenciennes. These operations, together with the proceedings of the siege, are specified in several letters to Godolphin.

"*Aug.* 17. — I have this day received the favours of yours of the 30th of the last month. I do wish, with all my heart, that the malicious report of our having beaten the enemy could have been true. We were on Thursday near enough for ignorant people to have judged that we might have fought; but the ground made it impossible. We have not yet quite overcome our difficulties, though we have forced them from several posts; they have none left but a path called the Cow-path, through a great bog, at which they can pass only one in front. We have several pieces of cannon that fire on the passage. and we are also endeavouring to make ourselves masters of it, and then we shall shut the town up on all sides. It is most certain that if we had now the German troops we might make them very uneasy, and, I fear, they will not be able to do much on the Rhine, though the French have been obliged to send both horse and foot from thence to the duke of Berwick. If we can succeed in this siege, we shall have the honour of having done it in the face of an army many thousand men stronger than we are. The constant fatigues, and the having got cold in my head, gives me great uneasiness all about my left ear, for which I am advised to make a blister; but as I intend to sweat this night, and not stir out to-morrow, I hope that may carry the pain off, which has been for these ten last days very uneasy."

"*Aug.* 20. — I think I may now assure you that our greatest difficulties for the siege of Bouchain are over, we having obliged the French to quit their posts, which hindered our investing the place. They are now shut up on all sides; and as soon as we can get our cannon and ammunition, we shall open the trenches, which will be at three several attacks, hoping by that to reduce the place much sooner. We are informed of the enemy's making magazines at Maubeuge, so that they may be able to act by diversion. As soon as they shall march that way I shall reinforce the garrisons of Mons and Bruxelles. My head is far from being well, but I thank God I am more at ease than when I wrote my last."

"*Aug.* 27. — We continue our application for the bringing every thing that we may want during this siege; so that the body of foot which are employed at the three attacks, and the horse which we are yet obliged to send out to secure our convoys, makes the whole in perpetual motion; but I hope in four or five days we shall have all in our camp, and about

the same time our batteries will be ready to fire. We have now, I thank God, very fine weather, which will be a great blessing if it continues. By my letters from Mr. Chetwood, I fear there will not be much more done on that side; and Prince Eugene complains of their wants: so that though his army is strong, he gives no hopes of being able to do any thing; however, I have desired him so to act, as that they might not be able to send any detachments into this country."

"*Sept.* 3. — Since my last the Marshal de Villars attempted two of our quarters, but miscarried in both His whole army is now employed in making and carrying of *, and by the batteries he has raised against us, it looks as if his thoughts were wholly employed for the forcing our communication over the morass. We are hard at work to prevent it. As long as the siege lasts we must expect he will use his best endeavours to trouble us. The Comte d'Arback, a lieut.-general of the Dutch, was taken at their last forage; he is the first lieut.-general that has been taken of this army during this war. The situation of both armies is so extraordinary, that our army which attacks the town is bombarded by the enemy; and we have several posts so near to each other that the sentinels have conversations. The whole French army being so camped that they are seen by the garrison of Bouchain, makes the defence the more obstinate; but, with the blessing of God, I hope we shall get the better of them, and, if they *opiniatre* beyond reason, may be an argument for their being made prisoners of war. The Spa waters, which I am persuaded would do me good, I find I must not think of taking till the siege be over. I hope in my next we may be able to guess how long this siege may last."

Among the letters addressed to the duke during the siege, we find one from Prince Eugene, in reply to his request for advice.

"*Muhlberg, Aug.* 24. — I received yesterday your highness's letter of the 15th, and I return you many thanks for the detail you have been so kind as to send me of your operations since the passage of the lines. I doubt not but your fatigue must have been excessive during the march, and some repose is absolutely necessary for the recovery of your health. If the line of circumvallation is now finished (as your highness informs me it was nearly done), and, consequently, all communication intercepted between the town and the new intrenchment of the enemy, I flatter myself that Marshal Villars will have the mortification to witness the capture of this important fortress, which will increase the glory of the enterprise.

"Your highness has acted judiciously in placing your intrenched camp on the other side of the Scheldt, and to be prepared against any movements which the enemy may make in the course of the siege. I am of opinion that your highness ought to spare no pains to strengthen your intrenchments on both sides of the river as much as possible, so that they may be defended with fewer troops, and that the remainder may be em-

* A word omitted, or illegible.

ployed wherever it may be necessary. This being executed, nothing more remains to be done than to press the siege, collect forage, and secure the convoy; and, from what I know of yours and the enemy's situation, this appears to be practicable. Your highness will please to excuse this liberty, which I have only taken in obedience to your commands, and to the desire you have been pleased to express of knowing my sentiments. I trust I need not repeat that no one is more interested than I am in what concerns you, or wishes you more success in the remainder of the campaign, which may contribute to a good peace.

"From hence I can only repeat that the inundations still detain us in this camp, and that our cavalry is in danger of perishing for want of forage. * * * * *

"As to the proceedings at Frankfort, with which you are desirous to be acquainted, the sessions will not assemble till to-morrow, under various pretexts. It is, however, asserted that the election will take place on the 20th of September; but I suspend my belief until I see how the first meetings have passed; for, to say the truth, it appears to me that the vicars and the grand chancellor of the empire are endeavouring to prolong the interregnum. But I say this confidentially."

In the midst of these military operations, his heart yearned towards his native country; and we find him anxiously expressing his sanguine wishes for the completion of the building at Blenheim, and his hopes that government would not fail to accomplish the works, in conformity with the promise of the queen.

To Lord Godolphin.

"*Aug.* 30. — Lady Marlborough has let me know that my friends are of opinion, I suppose she means you, that I should let the court govern the finishing of Blenheim. It has been always my opinion; however, I should be glad if Lord Rialton would go down thither for three or four days, and incline them to do all that is possible without doors as long as the season continues good; but after that is done, they should lose no time in employing the remainder of the money in finishing within doors, which may be done in the winter. I have had very great expressions and assurances from Lord Oxford. The finishing this building is the favour I shall, at my coming home, desire of him; for I have no ambition left, nor desire, indeed, but that of seeing this house finished, and that I might live quietly some few years in it with my friends. I think you have taken a right resolution in not advancing any money on this twenty thousand pounds, and in the winter I may have time to take measures with you what may be the most reasonable method for the carrying on this work, it being the only favour I shall ask or expect from the government. The enemy's superiority makes us almost every day meet with difficulties, but I have good reason to hope the siege will end to my satisfaction. I am ever, most faithfully, yours."

The grand obstacle to the prosecution of the siege being

removed by the occupation of the dyke and the works in the inundation, as well as by the safe arrival of the heavy artillery, no events of importance occurred, except the surprise of an allied detachment at Houdain, in which four battalions suffered severely, and the Prussian minister, Bourke, was taken prisoner, and the dispersion of some foragers, under an escort of seven squadrons, with the loss of a general and some officers, and the capture of twelve standards. Nor is it necessary to dwell on an unsuccessful attempt of Albergotti to surprise Douay.

These inconsiderable incidents had no effect on the operations of the siege. By the 8th of September the allies had carried on their approaches so far as to occupy the first counterscarp; and, by the 11th, two of the principal bastions were abandoned, and the breaches rendered practicable. On the 14th, after some ineffectual attempts to obtain a more honourable capitulation, the garrison, reduced to 3100 men, including sick and wounded, surrendered prisoners of war, the officers preserving their swords and baggage.

Marlborough announces this event in a letter to Godolphin, dated September 14.

"I am sure you will be very well pleased with the good news I send by Collins, of our being masters of Bouchain, and that the marshal de Villars has done us the honour of being witness of the garrisons being made prisoners of war. They consist of eight battalions and 500 Swiss. I was in hopes Lord Stair might have been here before this, so that I might, by this messenger, have answered your letter by him. The French, notwithstanding their superiority, burn all their forage in their power, in order to make our subsistence difficult. I intend to go out with a body of horse, to see if subsistence can be had about Quesnoy; for that place would be of great advantage to us; for, if it be practicable, I would yet, this campaign, attack that place. I find by a letter from Mr. Craggs, that the earl of Oxford does not think the clerks of the Treasury are proper persons for the passing the accounts of Blenheim. I could wish they were of the commission; but if that can't be, I beg you will instruct Mr. Craggs those that may be the next best, for I would be glad to have that matter settled. I fear the duke of Savoy's army is by this time returned to Piedmont, and Prince Eugene has acquainted me with the impossibility of his being able to do any thing on the Rhine, so that I do not doubt of the French bringing troops from thence hither. I have directed Collins to give you notice before he leaves London."

After filling up the ditches, and repairing the breaches, a fort was constructed, by order of the general, at the angle

formed by the junction of the Sanzet and Scheldt, as well to secure the communication between Bouchain and Douay as to obstruct the investment of Bouchain, should the marshal attempt to retake it.

The two armies remained in their respective positions; that of the allies to preserve a fortress which broke the connection of their formidable lines; while the enemy, to oppose the further enterprises of the British general, retained their posts with the bridges over the Sanzet and Scheldt.

We are gratified in laying before the reader an anecdote of our great commander, which shows that his respect for men of piety and learning was not lost in his ardour for military glory.

The character of Fénélon, archbishop of Cambray, is too well known to need any delineation. The estates of his see being exposed to the plunder of the troops, Marlborough ordered a detachment to guard the magazines of corn at Château Cambresis, and gave a safe-conduct for their conveyance to Cambray; and when even this protection, in consequence of the scarcity of bread, was not likely to be respected by the soldiery, he sent a corps of dragoons, with waggons, to transport the grain, and escort it to the precincts of the town. Thus did our illustrious general pay homage to the Christian philosopher, who honoured letters by his genius, religion by his piety, France by his renown, and human nature by his amiable virtues; and thus did he, in his conduct towards the author of Telemachus, imitate Alexander, at the capture of Thebes, when in the language of our sublime poet,

> "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
> Went to the ground." ———
>
> MILTON, *Sonnet VIII.*

CHAP. CIV. — CLOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN. — 1711.

AFTER the capture of Bouchain, Marlborough was anxious to commence, without delay, the siege of Quesnoy, which was the next operation in the intended project. With this

view he had sent proposals to the Dutch government, for the purpose of pressing them to co-operate vigorously in the necessary preparations, and to contribute their proportion of the expense.

This project continues to be the prominent feature in the interesting correspondence, which we now resume; and we find the treasurer entering into every detail, for the supply of the necessary charges attendant on the siege, as well as of forage and magazines, for the winter subsistence of the troops in Flanders.

From Lord Oxford.

" My Lord, " *July* 31.—*August* 11.

" On Saturday night Mr. Sutton arrived at Windsor, and gave me the honour of your grace's letter, and also the most agreeable news of your grace's having passed the lines, upon which I most heartily congratulate you; and I no way doubt but as your grace has signalised your conduct in obtaining this advantage, so you will improve it to the utmost for the common good. Mr. Secretary St. John has orders to write to Lord Orrery, according to Lord Stair's proposal, for facilitating the project, but it is in such a manner that his lordship will not be able to guess at the project; but the pretence is taken from your grace investing of Bouchain. As to the provision for the magazines, I desire your grace will let me know how much money must be advanced, and I will immediately take care to have it remitted. I will consult my Lord Stair, and what farther he thinks necessary to be done, in pursuance of your grace's directions, I will not fail to do my utmost to expedite the same. I can make your grace no return of news from hence for the good news you sent us. The queen has not pitched upon a person to have the privy seal, and, I believe, is not determined in her own mind as yet. On Sunday Colonel Killigrew arrived here from Spain, with letters from the duke of Argyle, who seems to be very uneasy there; and there are complaints that money is wanting, notwithstanding the very great sums which have been remitted for that service, which I fear have been applied to pay old debts which were never allowed; and, in the mean time, the soldiers were left to shift for themselves. But the truth of this will best appear when the commissioners are there, who are to inspect the state of that army. I know your grace is in a great hurry at this time, therefore I will interrupt you no longer, than to assure you that I do most heartily wish you all imaginable success, and am," &c.

Reply of the Duke.

" *Aug.* 20. — I was very well assured the good news I sent your lordship by Mr. Sutton would give you a great deal of satisfaction, and 'tis no less to me, to understand by the honour of your letter of the 31st past, that you do me the justice to believe I shall use my utmost endeavours to improve the advantage we have gained, for the service of her majesty

and the common good. I cannot yet give your lordship a final answer about the sum to be advanced for providing magazines. You will see by the memorial of the council of state at the Hague, and my answer to it, which I send by this post to Mr. Secretary St. John, the difficulties that still remain on that side. We are not yet agreed what number of troops shall be kept on this frontier; but as I am stedfastly of opinion, following the coercive project is the most likely means of bringing the enemy to reason, it will, consequently, be necessary to have as many troops together as possibly we can, to assure the execution of it. However, the money to be advanced, at the largest computation, will not amount to more than double the sum that was paid last for the like service.

"We have met with many difficulties in the investing of Bouchain, which, however, is at last effected. We have cut off the enemy's last hopes of keeping a communication with the town, and are now preparing to carry on the siege in form. I hope we shall be ready to break ground in three days. Your lordship knows the taking this place is a considerable article in the project. The siege, as far as it depends upon me, shall be pushed on with all possible vigour; and I do not altogether despair, but that from the success of this campaign we may hear of some advances made towards what we so much desire; and I shall esteem it much the happiest part of my life if I can be instrumental in putting a good end to the war, which grows so burthensome to our country, as well as to our allies. I am, with truth," &c.

From Lord Oxford.

"My Lord, "*Aug.* 14.–25.

"I received last night the honour of your grace's letter of the 20th instant, and do heartily rejoice that you are like to meet with so good success in the siege. Will not the enemy make some guess at the intended project by this siege? I suppose Lord Stair will think of returning the beginning of the next week, and by him I shall do myself the honour to write largely to your grace, as well as to speak freely to him. I am very desirous to settle the whole remittance for the campaign in Flanders this week, if it be possible, that I may have leisure for other affairs. I find the town is full of complaints from the army, about Mr. Sweet's * not continuing the payment as formerly. If I was not sure that your grace is too full of business, I would write at large about Spain; if that war be not put upon another foot it will entirely consume us, and the success answer nothing. They do nothing but make loud complaints, and yet have received their full money to Christmas next, within a hundred and odd thousand pounds. And as to Portugal, Lord Portmore says, he is assured, that the last fruitless campaign was concerted between the French and the Portuguese, who, notwithstanding all their clamour about their sufferings on the frontier of Elvas, the French did them not the least damage. I will add no more, but to beseech your grace to accept the assurance, that I am, with the most perfect respect," &c.

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* Deputy to the paymaster of the British forces resident at Amsterdam, and the Duke of Marlborough's confidential agent.

On reviewing the preceding correspondence, the reader will scarcely believe that the minister who could manifest such zeal for the prosecution of the war was deliberately deceiving the general, and had, at this moment, brought the secret negotiation with France nearly to a conclusion. Such, however, is the fact; and it is impossible to conceive how much farther he might have carried his duplicity, had not an unexpected incident excited suspicions of his double dealing.

To answer the amicable overtures from the French monarch, Prior had been sent in secrecy and disguise, for the purpose of establishing a direct communication between the two courts. During a stay of six weeks, he had brought the preliminaries to a settlement, and was returning with the same secrecy as he departed, in company with Mesnager, and the secretary of Torcy, when he was arrested by the mayor of Deal; and, for want of regular passports, he and his companions were detained as spies. The disclosure of his name, and the delivery of the secretary's warrant, procured his liberation; but the transaction could not be concealed, and the information which was conveyed from England appears to have induced Marlborough to request some information of what was passing. The ensuing letter shows the affectation of candour, with which the wily treasurer endeavoured to lull his suspicions. It needs no farther comment.

"*Sept.* 16. — Before this comes to your grace's hands, I hope you will be master of Bouchain, and I no ways doubt but that your grace will make the best use of that little which remains of the campaign, for the prosecuting what you have so wisely projected and so much to your own honour carried on thus far. Lord Stair will inform your grace of the little accidents which have detained him for some days, and since that, the last week the queen's gout has obliged his waiting for her majesty's letters to your grace. This has been the most regular fit her majesty has had for some years; it is neither attended with pain in her stomach, nor any of those weaknesses which her majesty has been liable to on the like occasion. She is got well enough to be able to walk with a stick, and is very cheerful and hearty. As to the project Lord Stair brought over, your grace knows that it had the queen's approbation, and lord chamberlain writes to you his opinion. As to my part, I desire my actions may show my approbation, and I will immediately issue such sums of money as you shall judge necessary, for making the requisite magazines.

"And now my lord, since I must speak of myself, I can say no more

than this, that I shall leave it to my actions to speak for me, and so give your grace demonstration that I am the same man towards you as I was the first day I had the honour of your acquaintance; and I shall as heartily promote every thing under your care as I did, or would have done, in any time since I have been known to you. I am now to acquaint your grace with a letter I have received this day from Mr. Secretary St. John, whose week it is to stay at Windsor. He says that he has received a letter from Mr. Bothmar, that the elector is apprehensive the Danes will take quarters in Bremen; and he fears, by that, and marching cross his country, they may spread the plague in his territory. To prevent this, the elector desires that some of the horse and dragoons may be allowed to winter in his country. This is so contrary to what your grace projects, that some way must be found to prevent the inconvenience, or to replace what shall be so drawn away; but having spoke at large to Lord Stair on that subject, I will trouble you no farther to repeat my discourse, having read thus far of this letter to his lordship.

"I have this moment received the honour of your grace's letter of Sept. 9. My view in proposing the taking an account was only for your grace's service*; and all the money being issued without account, except such as should be rendered to your grace, it will be only proper for you to name those who shall take that account.

"I have spoke this night so freely to Lord Stair on the affairs of Spain and Portugal, and the method of putting that war on a better foot, that I shall not trouble your grace to write what his lordship will better declare by word of mouth.

"Now, as to the affair of peace, which I mentioned in my last, the sum of what is hitherto done is this. Some in Holland having this summer, by divers ways, endeavoured to set on foot a negotiation for peace, and France not being prevailed with to begin with them, sent a proposition directly to England. The queen declared she would enter into no separate treaty, nor would receive any thing she would not transmit to the States. Upon this, they sent a general offer of giving satisfaction to England, to Holland, to the emperor and all the allies, and to give a sureté réel for our commerce; but this being only in generals, it was insisted upon that it should be explained, which they sent one to do, and he is ordered to prepare such a proposition, as may be fit to be transmitted to Holland, which is not yet done. This is the substance of every thing which hath passed. I suppose a very few days will show whether they are in earnest. This is kept as secret as it can be, though there is not one step taken, which will not speedily be laid open in Holland, when Lord Strafford goes over, who is to be married to-morrow to Sir Henry Johnson's daughter. I beseech your grace to believe, that I am, with the most perfect respect," &c.

Reply of the Duke.

"*Sept.* 17.—Soon after I had despatched away Collins, with an

* This paragraph relates to the appointment of commissioners for examining the accounts of the expenditure at Blenheim.

account of the surrender of Bouchain, I received the honour of your lordship's letter of Aug. 28.—Sept. 8, and am very much obliged to you for the good news you send me of the queen's being so well recovered from her last fit of the gout. As the continuance of her majesty's health is the foundation of all our happiness, 'tis the constant subject of my prayers, and perfect obedience to her commands is the business of my life.* I return your lordship many thanks for the advice you are pleased to give me of the overture made from the French court for a general peace. upon which, till I receive your farther instructions by Lord Stair, I can only give you assurance, that, besides the discharge of my duty, nothing in the world can be more agreeable to my inclinations, than to be any way instrumental in the concluding, as soon as possible, such a peace as may be to the satisfaction of her majesty, and the good of my country. And wherever I may be thought serviceable in that important affair, I shall be glad to show as much zeal as I have endeavoured to do in the prosecution of the war.

"The death of Lord Jersey gives me fresh occasion to wish for a speedy end of the war, that I may enjoy a little repose before my own time comes. I do not doubt but the queen will have all reason to be satisfied with the choice she has made of the bishop of Bristol, who has shown abroad how fitly he is qualified to do her majesty service at home. I am with truth, my lord," &c.

While the British general was revolving in his mind the accomplishment of his project, and accelerating the preparations for the siege of Quesnoy, his curiosity could not fail to be excited by the discovery of the mysterious negotiations, as well as by the evasive explanation of the treasurer. He waited with impatience the return of Lord Stair, for an explicit description of the state of the cabinet, the progress of the negotiation, and the views of the minister. That nobleman, indeed, returned at this moment, after a stay of more than a month in England. His own honest and indignant language will best describe his reception, and the success of his journey.

"I went to London, and delivered my Lord Marlborough's letter to Lord Oxford. After many delays, I had at last a very free conference with his lordship, in which he spoke with great freedom and plainness to me. I thought, by all my lord said, our conversation was to have ended in establishing a very good understanding between my lord treasurer and the Duke of Marlborough; but his lordship in the end thought

* Can this be true after the humiliation the duke had so recently suffered on his knees from Queen Anne, without taking any thing by his motion? If so, Marlborough must have been the most forgiving or dissembling of men. — Ed.

fit to say, that he must defer declaring his final resolution upon the whole matter till our next conversation, which he faithfully promised me should happen in a very few days. The detail of his conversation was extremely curious, and very well worth your knowledge; but I must delay giving it you at present. If ever we happen to meet, I shall give you a full account of it. From day to day I put my Lord Oxford in mind of finishing our conversation, but to no purpose. In the interval Mr. Prior was sent them back from France, which they took to be a *carte blanche* for settling all the differences of Europe; and, in the end, I was allowed to go back to the siege of Bouchain, with a bamboozling letter from my Lord Oxford to the Duke of Marlborough."*

From Lord Oxford.

"My Lord, "*Sept.* 11.–22.

"I have just now received the honour of your grace's letter from Mr. Collins of Sept. 14. I do most heartily congratulate your grace's success in the reduction of Bouchain, and I do most sincerely wish your succeeding undertakings may be crowned with the like success. I am sorry to find that the States are so backward to comply with what is necessary for carrying on your grace's project; but I hope Lord Albemarle will prevail with them. Lord Stair will have informed your grace of the elector of Hanover's demands, about some part of his troops. Your grace knows the regard which is paid to his electoral highness here; and he having wrote to your grace upon that subject, the secretary is to write to you to manage that affair in the best way not to disoblige the elector, and at the same time not to let it be an example to other princes, to recall their troops. Nothing farther hath passed in the great affair mentioned in my letter by my Lord Stair. I suppose the contrary wind hath kept back the answer expected.† I do again most sincerely congratulate your grace on your good success, and beseech you to accept the assurance, that I am, with the greatest sincerity and most perfect esteem and respect," &c.

The Duke of Marlborough to Lord Oxford.

"My Lord, "*Sept.* 24.

"In my last I had not time so much as to mention a very material article in the letter Lord Stair brought me from your lordship. I have since discoursed very largely upon the subject of it, and am so fully apprised of your opinion of the affairs in Spain and Portugal, and your method of putting that war on a better foot, that there is very little room left for me to add any thing. There might, doubtless, be many inconveniences removed, by converting that whole expense into subsidies, which would bring it to certainty, save a great number of the queen's subjects, and such troops might be employed as have constitutions better

* Continuation of Lord Stair's letter to Lord Marchmont, Edinburgh, Dec. 10. 1734.

† Probably alluding to the state of the negotiation, which he still concealed from the duke, although the articles had been arranged, and were on the point of being signed.

fitted for those climates. The great difficulty will be to find sufficient assurance that the money shall be duly employed to the use for which it is given, in which, however, I should sooner hope for an exact compliance from King Charles than from the King of Portugal. The former being now become head of the councils at Vienna, and master of the revenues, will not be under such pressing necessities as he has been hitherto, and, in all probability, may not want inclination, when he has it in his power, as well to pursue his own point, as to testify some gratitude for what her majesty has done for him; but your lordship is already too well acquainted with the present spirit of the Portuguese court, to expect any great good from thence, whatever methods we may take to deserve it from them. After all, your lordship will give me leave to offer my opinion, that whatever is determined, the States should at the same time be pressed not to be any way wanting on their part; for if, when we have done all that can be required of us, there remains the least ground of complaint, though the fault should lie at others' doors, we shall be equal sufferers. This letter is longer than I thought when I began it, and is not so much intended for your information as to convince you that I shall be always ready to give you my thoughts on any subject, when they may be of use; and my actions shall always confirm the truth with which I profess myself to be, my lord," &c.

Strange as it may seem to the candid mind, to observe the duplicity practised by the treasurer, while his schemes were in progress; it must excite still deeper indignation to find him, even after he had sanctioned these fatal preliminaries, assuming the same hypocritical professions, encouraging the general to prosecute his project, and affecting to chide the Dutch for their lukewarm and selfish conduct.

From Lord Oxford.

" My Lord, ... " *Sept. 25.—Oct*

" Mr. Drummond being arrived from Holland, I carried him to Windsor, to wait upon the queen, where he had an opportunity of laying before her majesty the opinion of Lord Albemarle and the grand pensionary, on the affair of providing forage for the troops, and the additional charge of stables and cazerns, &c. He was not able to name what sum would fall to the share of England; and, indeed, I do believe it would be almost impossible to fix any sum at present. But the queen ordered me to communicate it to the lords, and they being of opinion, that the whole project depends upon the providing of the forage, I am directed to let your grace know, that it is left to your grace to make the best bargain you can, for the queen's proportion, both of the forage and the stabling, &c. In the latter it is to be observed, that the utensils, after the service is over, will remain to the States, which will be considered in the proportion they are to bear in that expense. Being kept late at Windsor, I have not time to enlarge; but I was not willing this post should go without giving your grace this account, and assuring you, that I am, with the greatest respect," &c.

" My Lord, " *Sept.* 28.—*Oct.* 9.

" The next day after I wrote last to your grace I received the honour of your letter of Oct. 2. I am much concerned that Lord Albemarle finds so much difficulty at the Hague. I signified, in my last, the queen's readiness to come into her share; and the lords have met again upon it, and after had a conference with my Lord Strafford, who goes over fully instructed to press the States very warmly upon this head. On Sunday it will be considered what farther measures can be taken to prevail with the States. I believe my Lord Strafford will be over as soon as this letter; for the yachts are ready to carry him over. As to what your grace is pleased to write, about the advance on the contracts for the winter magazines, I have directed Mr. Bridges to deliver in a demand for what is necessary for that service, on Tuesday next. Mr. Hill being again fallen ill, and Mr. Methuen's domestic affairs not permitting him to leave England, the queen, for dispatch, will be obliged to make use of one of her ministers, who is near there, to be arbitrator at Milan. I beseech your grace to accept the assurance, that I am, with the utmost respect," &c.

The Duke of Marlborough to Lord Oxford.

" My Lord, " *Camp near Bouchain, Oct.* 15.

" By my last to Mr. Secretary, your lordship will have seen the utmost of what we are to expect from the States, towards the execution of our project. The remarks I have made upon their last resolution may serve to set the matter in its true light; but I can scarce expect any other effect from it. Your lordship will see, by the disposition of the winter quarters, that we shall want near threescore squadrons of the number proposed for the frontiers; but I hope what we have may, by the care and diligence of the commanders, be employed to very good use. M. Villars is doing part of our work for us, by continuing so long in his camp, and consuming whatever could be expected from the neighbouring country for the subsistence of his troops in the winter.

" Mr. Cardonel sends now to Mr. Lowndes a state of the pay of the general officers for this year, to be laid before your lordship, in which he has comprehended all such as have any relation to this army, whether they serve or not. For the former, I presume your lordship will not disapprove my giving the usual warrant; but for the others, I must pray your directions, what answers I may give upon their applications. My lord, this is a matter in which I apply to your friendship. You know my single word will scarce pass current, and I should be sorry any reproach should lie at my door, for not being able to gratify such persons as may have merit beyond the extent of the establishment. I have hitherto been so impartial in my distributions, that for three years past that my brother has not served I have left him out of the warrants, though he has been continued upon the establishment. I will only observe to your lordship, that my Lord Orrery and Brigadier Hamilton, who have been on this side during the campaign, will probably think their pretensions the best grounded.

" My Lord Orrery has sent hither one Mr. Beaumont, who furnishes

bread to the troops of the States, with proposals for furnishing the forage this winter. They are the fairest of any that have been yet made, and near a penny a ration cheaper than what the Dutch pay; so that I have concluded to contract with him, and the articles of agreement shall be sent to Mr. Lowndes as soon as they are settled and signed."

"*Oct.* 22. — In my last I acknowledged the honour of your lordship's letter of the 25th past, but had not time to express my sense of the gracious manner in which the queen is pleased to encourage the prosecution of the project, which, with the confidence her majesty thought fit to repose in me, for making bargains for the forage and stabling, I look upon as a particular mark of her satisfaction in my zeal for her service; and I know, my lord, I have no small obligations to you for your good offices on this occasion.

"I have thought fit for the service to communicate your letter of the 28th to my Lord Albemarle, who is now with me. He has writ largely to the Hague upon the subject of it. The justice he has done to her majesty's generosity, and the zeal of her ministers, and your lordship in particular, is a reproach to those in Holland; but as the loss of time on their part has made it impracticable to provide what they proposed, I think they cannot reasonably expect her majesty should bear any part of the extraordinary charge, except that of the forage for the troops in her own pay. And as it has been from the beginning of the war my particular care to keep them from breaking in upon us in expenses of this nature, I shall be no less vigilant now that I think they have no colour for making any demands from us, since they have not complied with the whole.

"I send now to Mr. Bridges a contract I have signed with Beaumont for forage. He will have the honour to lay it before your lordship. This contract has been made with the best husbandry that could be, and you will please to observe, that we have the advantage of giving a month's warning for the forage for the spring. This was done with a particular view to the overtures from France your lordship was pleased to communicate to me some time since; and I pray God we may not have occasion to put her majesty to that expense. I am, with much truth."

During this period Secretary St. John wrote in the same style of cordiality, approving the project against Quesnoy, in his own behalf, as well as in the name of the queen, and reiterating the assurances, that the strongest representations had been made to the Dutch, for the purpose of engaging their hearty concurrence. At the same time both the ministers were mocking the Duke of Marlborough with this affectation of hearty support, being well aware that the States, who were acquainted with the pending negotiations, would not agree to the siege of Quesnoy, or enter into any unnecessary expenditure, for a design which they knew was not likely to be carried into execution.

In fact, notwithstanding the promise of the queen, that she would carry on the negotiation in concurrence with the States, no official communications were made to the republic for several months after the delivery of the preliminary articles proposed by the French court. The whole transaction was clandestinely managed between Torcy and the British ministers, through the agency of Mesnager, who accompanied Prior on his return to England. On the 27th of September the preliminaries, founded on the basis of the seven articles, were signed by Mesnager, on the part of France, and by the two secretaries of state, in virtue of a warrant from the queen. In this dishonourable instrument the only specific propositions were, the acknowledgment of the queen's title and the Protestant succession by the king of France, and his engagement to take all just and reasonable measures that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united on the head of the same prince, from a persuasion that this excess of power would be contrary to the good and quiet of Europe. Thus, with a single stroke of the pen, was overturned the leading principle of the grand alliance, that no Bourbon prince should ever fill the throne of Spain. A secure and convenient barrier was, indeed, promised to the States, the empire, and the house of Austria, but without the mention of any precise cession. Dunkirk was to be demolished, but a proper equivalent was to be settled on in the conferences; the pretensions of the allies were to be discussed *bonâ fide* and amicably, and nothing omitted to terminate them to the satisfaction of all parties.

With an affectation of good faith and sincerity, a copy of these preliminaries was transmitted to Count Gallas, the imperial minister; and, by him, a translation was inserted, without a moment's delay, in a newspaper called the Post Boy, by which means they were prematurely made public. An official copy was likewise communicated to the States, and their concurrence peremptorily demanded. These preliminaries were received in Holland with universal indignation. They disgusted even Buys himself, and his adherents, who had been so eager for peace, that to procure it they would have ceded Naples and Sicily to Philip, provided Spain and the Indies were withheld from a Bourbon prince, and a specific barrier assigned. The States accordingly despatched

Buys into England, to join with the ministers of the other allies in remonstrating against such unwarrantable concessions. Meanwhile, Gallas had been ignominiously dismissed; and the ministers not only bitterly complained of the interference of the States, but positively warned them, that if they did not concur in the acceptance of these preliminaries, England would consider the smallest delay as a refusal, carry on the negotiations without them, and enter into no concert for the future prosecution of the war.*

While this affair was yet in agitation, the treasurer thus wrote to the general: —

"*Oct.* 30. — I received the honour on Wednesday last of three letters together from your grace, dated Oct. 15th, 19th, and 22d. I am not in a condition to answer the several particulars by this post; but I hope to be well enough to do it by the next. As to the general officers, your grace is the best judge of their services, and, I know, will be desirous to make the puplic money go as far as is possible. As to the forage, of the seventy thousand pounds which were remitted last week, twenty thousand are designed for that service, in case your grace thinks so much necessary to be advanced at present. If I mistake not, there was not above fifteen thousand advanced last year; but it is left to your grace to apportion that sum, and to regulate it as you shall see best for the service. As to the project for winter quarters, which had so general an approbation, and to the extraordinary expense of which her majesty, upon your grace's recommendation, did so heartily concur, I am sorry those who are most concerned to support it are so willing to let it drop. Ours is a very unlucky situation, that every one is shrinking from the war, and at the same time casting the burden upon Britain, and yet unwilling to let her have the least advantage. I would to God that our allies would resolve either to make a good war or a good peace.†

"M. Buys came to town yesterday; I have not yet seen him, not being able to go abroad. I suppose he will go to Windsor on Sunday. Some of his countrymen have been so kind to him as to write to their correspondents here, that he is come to demand more troops, and to put an end to the beginning of a negotiation for peace. This will not render him very agreeable to the bulk of this nation; but I believe these are rumours spread by some who are no very good friends to M. Buys. Count Gallas has ordered some of those heads (for they are not preliminaries) to be printed, by some of our news scribblers, which, I believe, is the first instance of that kind, but not of the count's indiscretions, or pas-

* Memoires de Torcy. — Mesnager's Negotiations. — St. John's Letters to the earl of Strafford, in Bolingbroke's Correspondence, together with the account of this clandestine negotiation in the publications of the times, and the English historians.

† There is a clause here omitted, which will appear in p. 261, &c.

sions, at the least. I cannot but think the States and all the allies may have these heads explained and extended to reasonable satisfaction; but if they cast away the opportunity, they themselves must bear the blame. I will end your grace's trouble at this time, with beseeching you to believe me to be, with the utmost respect and sincerity," &c.

In consequence of the demurs on the part of the Dutch, it is not to be wondered that the Duke of Marlborough should relinquish the siege of Quesnoy, and the farther prosecution of the project. But we cannot sufficiently abhor the Machiavelian policy of the ministers, when Secretary St. John could, with cool and malicious effrontery, observe to the queen: — "I take the liberty, besides the extract of what our office letters bring, to trouble your majesty with a private letter from the Duke of Marlborough, and the papers which came enclosed in it. If the project has been disappointed, it has not been so by your majesty, who gave orders for readily entering into the necessary measures on your part. However, it is of some use to have my Lord Marlborough's confession, that we may be disabled from doing any thing the next year, and that the enemy may, perhaps, be in a condition to act offensively."*

After continuing three weeks with the army, to put Bouchain in a posture of defence, and secure the navigation of the Scarpe to Douay, Marlborough made preparations to close the campaign, by sending his troops into winter quarters.

* Mr. Coxe's partiality for his hero beguiles his judgment, and his reproaches of the new ministry for concealing from the general the progress of the negotiations for peace are too severe. The war had been too promotive of the glory and pecuniary interests of Marlborough for him to have been a safe counsellor on the speediest and best mode of terminating hostilities. It is possible the duke was sincere in his desire for peace; but it was a peace on his own terms,— dictated, probably, in the French capital, or, at least, involving the complete humiliation, if not subjugation, of France. The negotiations in 1706 evinced the onerous conditions the confederates were intent on enforcing, if possible, on Louis XIV. At the close of every campaign, Marlborough, like his heroic colleague, Eugene, was always for trying another passage of arms with the *grande monarque;* and the peace of Europe would have certainly been postponed *sine die* had it been left to the pleasure of these illustrious warriors. Therefore, we cannot help thinking that the conduct of the ministry was politic, not only in dispensing with the services of Marlborough as a principal in a pacific mission, but also in suffering him at the same time to push the war with his characteristic vigour, as his successes would undoubtedly be conducive to more favourable terms. — Ed.

On the point of his departure, he appears to have been affected by the renewal of the accusations with which he had been assailed for prolonging the war; and no less mortified by the prospect of the humiliating part which he was likely to perform at the Hague, deprived of the confidence of the government, and excluded from all official knowledge of political transactions. Under this impression, he appears to have written to the treasurer in a tone of unusual querulousness and disappointment.

"I took it for a singular mark of your lordship's friendship, that you were pleased some time ago to communicate to me the overtures that were made from France towards a peace; and though I am no way curious to know what passes on that subject, yet I cannot conceal from you the concern I am under, lest you should have taken some impressions from the writings and discourses of such as pretend, either out of friendship to me, or by my encouragement, to promote the continuance of the war. I protest to you, my lord, they do not utter my sentiments; there is nothing upon earth I wish more than an end of the war. Her majesty has not a subject who desires it more heartily than I do. I am perfectly convinced that, besides the draining our nation both of men and money, almost to the last extremity, our allies do, by degrees, so shift the burden of the war upon us, that, at the rate they go on, the whole charge must at last fall on England. I assure you I should never have had the confidence to propose the least expense, were it not out of hopes that such an extraordinary effort would have as good an effect, and induce the enemy to think seriously of peace, when they found the war so coming home to them; and 'tis possible the apprehensions of the execution of our project may have had some influence that way. But, my lord, as you have given me encouragement to enter into the strictest friendship with you, and I have done nothing to forfeit it, I beg your friendly advice in what manner I am to govern myself. You cannot but imagine 'twould be a terrible mortification to pass by the Hague, with our plenipotentiaries there; and myself a stranger to their transactions; and what hopes can I have of any countenance at home, if I am not thought fit to be trusted abroad. I could have been contented to have passed the winter on the frontier, if the States had done their part; but, under my present circumstances, I am really at a loss what part to take. My lord, I have put myself wholly into your hands, and shall be entirely guided by your advice, if you will be so kind as to favour me with it. We shall scarce be able to move from hence before the end of the month; for besides the continuance of M. Villars in the neighbourhood, we shall be obliged to stay here till our frontier towns are sufficiently provided with forage. My writing in this manner is a freedom I should not take with your lordship if I were capable of making an ill use or a bad return for your friendship; and I demand of you, as a piece of justice, that you will believe me, with the greatest truth," &c.

Marlborough quitted Bouchain on the 25th, and repaired

to Marchiennes. We find a letter dated from this place, which evinces a strong anxiety to cultivate the good will of the treasurer, with whom, as a servant of the queen, he was under the necessity of acting.

"*Marchiennes, Oct.* 26. — This is the last I shall trouble your lordship with from these parts. 'Tis chiefly to acquaint you that I now send to Mr. Secretary a resolution of the States, which their deputies communicated to me the 23d in the evening, with the answer I returned them. By the former it is insinuated the States expect the queen should come into a part of the extraordinary charge occasioned by quartering on the frontiers the number of troops specified in the last distribution. This I think so unreasonable, that I do not give them the least encouragement to hope for any manner of compliance beyond the forage for her majesty's own troops, and I shall continue to use the same language to them, unless you shall instruct me otherwise; for I understand the directions in your lordship's letter of the 28th past relate only to what her majesty was inclined to do, if the States had wholly complied with the first project. What they now propose is altogether impracticable: it would keep us a month longer in the field, to make all their inquiries, and, besides that, several of our troops are already gone to their quarters. We have not forage for two days more, so that the marshal de Villars being marched on Friday last, I design this army shall do the same to-morrow, in order to separate; and I shall be the same night at Tournay, where I intend to stay the rest of the week, to give such directions as may be necessary during the winter. The number of troops on this frontier does not require any other generals than the governors of the towns; and my Lord Albemarle, being the eldest of them, I have ordered the rest to meet me, with him, at Tournay, to settle every thing; so that, if it be possible, what is left here may not be altogether useless, but contribute in some measure to the great end I have so much at heart, and facilitate the advances France makes towards peace. It will take me up another week to get to the Hague, where I propose to make but a very short stay if I find the yachts ready to carry me over; and I entreat your lordship, will please to direct Mr. Lowndes to send orders to the custom house, that my baggage, and some small remains of my camp provisions, may pass directly to Whitehall, and be visited there, as has been practised in former years. I flatter myself your lordship will believe me, when I promise you I will make no ill use of this indulgence. In fine, my lord, I desire this may serve to prepare you to receive me, such as you would desire to find me, full of gratitude for the several marks of your friendship this campaign, and of resolution to do all that lies in my power to cultivate it; and to convince, not only yourself, but all the world, that nothing can be more sincere than the profession I make of being ever, with truth, my lord," &c.

The unfortunate revolution in the British ministry, and the consequent change of measures, produced a disastrous effect in every part of the theatre of war. In Spain the con-

sequences were peculiarly fatal. Philip, apprised of the favourable result likely to arise from the pending negotiations between France and England, justly deemed himself secure of retaining the Spanish crown. He sent full powers to Louis to make any reasonable concession which might accelerate a peace, and acquiesced in the defensive system, to which the French monarch prudently confined his military operations on the side of Catalonia.

Charles becoming, by the death of his brother, head of the house of Austria, and candidate for the throne of the empire, was anxious to exchange a scanty and precarious sovereignty for an extensive and hereditary dominion, and to enjoy, without delay, the expected honours of the imperial dignity. He continued, therefore, at Barcelona, only to quiet the alarms of his faithful Catalans, and to superintend the military operations. After consigning to Marshal Staremberg the supreme command of the army, which had been reinforced by 7000 men, he took his departure in the month of September. In an affectionate letter to his Spanish subjects, he stated the causes of his absence, praised their loyalty, announced his speedy return, and confided the government to his consort, whom he recommended as the most precious pledge which he could intrust to their fidelity.

On the 27th of September Charles embarked on board the English fleet, and landed at Vado on the 8th of October. The Genoese government having declined to receive him as king of Spain, he scornfully rejected the offer of a convoy, and proceeded on his journey to his Italian dominions without halting in the territories of the republic. At Pavia he had an interview with the duke of Savoy, and entered Milan with all the pomp of sovereignty. In this city he was hailed with the joyful intelligence of his election to the imperial throne, which took place at Frankfort on the 8th of October. After receiving the homage of his new subjects, and congratulations from the ministers of Venice, Tuscany, and Parma, in his joint capacity of emperor and king of Spain, he was gratified with the tardy, though respectful acknowledgments of the republic of Genoa. Departing from Italy, the emperor elect was crowned at Frankfort, with unusual pomp, on the 22d of December. In addition to his other titles, he assumed that of king of Spain, and in that quality created

several knights of the golden fleece. Repairing to Vienna, he took quiet possession of all his hereditary dominions, confirmed the pacification of Hungary, directed the most vigorous preparations for continuing the war against the house of Bourbon, and exerted his strenuous efforts to traverse the pending negotiations.

It seemed as if the war in Spain had been suffered to languish by the mutual consent of the English and French cabinets. Although the Commons had granted 1,500,000*l.* for that service, and the ministers had expressed great solicitude to remedy the negligence of their predecessors, by prosecuting hostilities in the peninsula with increasing vigour, they yet contrived to restrain the military movements within the limits adapted to their pacific views.

The duke of Argyle, indeed, reached Barcelona on the 29th of May, in the quality of ambassador and commander of the British forces; but he came without remittances, and unprovided with funds, except 10,000*l.*, which he raised at Genoa on his own personal credit. This scandalous neglect, and the trifling reinforcements which he received, palsied the military operations, and the whole campaign passed in desultory skirmishes, without any affair of importance, except the investment of Cardona by the duke of Vendome, and its relief by Marshal Staremberg, after defeating the enemy, and capturing their artillery, ammunition, and baggage. At the close of the campaign both armies resumed nearly the same positions as they had occupied in the commencement.*

The reader has already anticipated the inactive position of the armies in the empire; for as the election of Charles had the private concurrence of the French and British cabinets, the hostile troops on the Rhine remained on the defensive, and several detachments were even forwarded, to reinforce the army of the duke of Berwick in Dauphiné. The chief object of Prince Eugene was, to maintain the tranquillity of Germany, to watch the motions of the enemy, and cover the diet of election. As soon, therefore, as the inauguration of Charles had taken place, he distributed his army into winter quarters, and the French followed his example.

On the side of the Alps the military operations were as

* House of Austria, chap. 80. — Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 19. — Memoires de St. Philippe, vol. iii. p. 7.

little decisive as in other quarters. Although the duke of Savoy was induced to resume the command of the combined army, his presence was attended with no effectual advantage. After forcing his way into Savoy, and penetrating towards the frontiers of Provence, his progress was arrested by the able dispositions of the duke of Berwick, who posted his army so advantageously in the vicinity of Barreaux as to repel the allies on whatever point they advanced. As the autumnal season approached, Victor Amadeus retraced his steps ; and the only beneficial result of his movements was, as before, to weaken, by draughts, the army on the Rhine, and prevent the march of reinforcements into Catalonia.

In Portugal no military operations of consequence occurred. The combined forces, under the earl of Portmore, re-captured Miranda de Douro, but were prevented from undertaking the siege of Badajoz, by an incursion of the Bourbon troops, under the marquis de Bay; and both armies, as if by mutual consent, retired early into winter quarters.

Chap. CV. — Contests with the Ministry. — 1711.

The successes of Marlborough were now decried by his party opponents with more asperity than usual. The passage of the French lines was contemptuously called the crossing of the kennel; and whatever honour might attach to the enterprise was ascribed to the count of Hompesch, by whom the vanguard was led. The investment of Bouchain was stigmatised as futile, and he was censured for having sacrificed 16,000 men in the capture of a dove-cote. From these specimens of political obloquy, we may estimate the calumnies lavished on the British commander, and spare the reader a detail which disgraces the pages of our annals.

Unfortunately, these libellous attacks were not unprovoked ; for, without his participation or privity, the duchess, by means of Maynwaring and other agents, had deluged the press with the grossest libels against the queen and ministry*,

* In several of Mr. Maynwaring's letters we find numerous allusions to various satirical ballads and lampoons, which he and her other agents

and thus furnished too much excuse for retaliation on the duke himself. On the 19th of October, however, he wrote two affecting letters to the treasurer and the secretary, bitterly lamenting the cruelty of such unmerited scurrilities, and requesting their suppression. The letter to St. John is not extant; but we learn by a note from him to the queen, how little impression was made by the appeal of Marlborough:—"I have several letters from Lord Marlborough. One of the 15th mentions the ill state of his health, and desires that your majesty will please to order a convoy and the yachts for him. Another of the 19th is very extraordinary. I had taken notice in a letter, which I knew would be shown him again, of the impertinence of his chaplain, who published libels against your majesty's government. He denies that the person suspected had wrote the book complained of, and then finds fault with the answer to it, forgetting that the sermon preached before himself, and since printed, was still worse, and more seditious than the other paper."*

The letter to the treasurer conveys a proof of that excessive sensibility which we are concerned to observe in so great a mind.

"*Oct.* 19.—I have had so many marks of your lordship's friendship, and have so sincerely endeavoured to deserve a continuance of it, that I apply myself to you in the tenderest part of it, and lay open my private griefs to you with the same freedom you allow me in what regards the public. There are two papers lately published on your side, and some copies are already got here; the title of one is "Bouchain," and the other an answer to it. I do not know whether your lordship looks into such papers, and I heartily wish they had been kept from me. I am sure you cannot hear of one without the other; and when I protest to you I am no way concerned in the former, I doubt not but you will have some feeling of what I suffer from the latter. As I have had all the reason in the world to be satisfied with every thing your lordship has done, in regard to myself, ever since I left you, and particularly your punctual remittances for the troops, I have taken all occasions to make my satisfaction as publicly known, as all the officers of the army can bear me witness;

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were daily fabricating. Among these was a severe caricature of Harley, under the name of Polypragmon, which was introduced in No. 190. of the Tatler, and must have highly provoked his resentment.

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 413. He here alludes to a sermon preached by Dr. Hare, before the duke, in the camp, on the 11th of September, which contains no other libellous matter than a severe reprehension of a precipitate and dishonourable peace.

and it is so much the more mortifying to find myself and family treated in such a manner, when I had so much reason to hope the spirit from whence it proceeds was quite suppressed. I find it is insinuated that the provocation came from that side, and from the pen of one that has been long near me *; but, upon examination, he has so fully cleared himself, that I am perfectly satisfied of his innocence, and nobody can wish more than I do that such writings could be suppressed; but if they can't be, it is very hard that when any body will use my name, I should be reviled in such a manner. The authors of these papers, as well the one as the other, are not only my enemies, they are yours too, my lord; they are enemies to the queen, and poison to her subjects; and it would be worth the while to make a strict search after them, that the punishment they deserve may be inflicted upon them. But all the remedy, all the ease I can at present expect, under this mortification is, that you, my lord, would do me the justice to believe me in no way an abettor or encourager of what has given me a mortal wound; but I will endeavour to bear up under it. I have that consolation from you; and as every thing else I could desire from you has been hitherto granted before I could ask it, I flatter myself you will not deny me this satisfaction, no more than that of believing me, ever, with the greatest truth," &c. †

Reply of Oxford. ‡

"*Oct.* 30.— As to the contents of your grace's letter of the 19th, I hope my sentiments are so fully known of that villanous way of libelling, I need say little to your grace upon that subject. When I had the honour to be secretary of state, I did, by an impartial prosecution, silence most of them, until a party of men, for their own ends, supported them against the laws and my prosecution. I do assure your grace I abhor the practice as mean and disingenuous. I have made it so familiar to myself, by some years' experience, that as I know I am every week, if not every day, in some libel or other, so I would willingly compound that all the ill-natured scribblers should have licence to write ten times more against me, upon condition they would write against nobody else. I do assure your grace I neither know nor desire to know any of the authors; and, as I heartily wish this barbarous war was at an end, I shall be very ready to take my part in suppressing them."

If the sensitive mind of Marlborough was thus affected by the ministerial lampoons of the day, which principally assailed his political life and military talents, it is not difficult to imagine how deeply his feelings were wounded, when, on his arrival at the Hague, his moral conduct was arraigned, and he was accused of fraud, extortion, and embezzlement of the public money.

* Alluding to his chaplain, Dr. Hare.

† Hardwicke Papers. Printed in Somerville's Queen Anne.

‡ The rest of this letter is printed in the preceding chapter, page 253.

The commissioners appointed to inquire into the abuses of the expenditure examined, among others, Sir Solomon Medina, contractor for the supply of bread and bread-waggons for the forces in the Netherlands, in the pay of the queen. He deposed, that he had privately paid into the hands of the Duke of Marlborough, for his own use, an annual sum, from 1707 to 1710, inclusive, which, added to the claim for the current year, amounted in the aggregate to 63,319*l.* This deposition being mysteriously whispered, and industriously circulated, as a state secret, soon became generally known, both at home and abroad; and, on such slender evidence, he was held up to the indignation of the world as a public defaulter.

Without a moment's delay the insulted general drew up a brief but masterly vindication of his conduct, and transmitted it to the commissioners, through the channel of Mr. Craggs.

"Gentlemen,—Having been informed, on my arrival here, that Sir Solomon de Medina has acquainted you with my having received several sums of money from him, that it might make the less impression on you, I would lose no time in letting you know, that this is no more than what has been allowed as a perquisite to the general, or commander-in-chief of the army in the Low Countries, even before the Revolution, and since; and I do assure you at the same time, that whatever sums I have received on that account have been constantly employed for the service of the public, in keeping secret correspondence, and getting intelligence of the enemy's motions and designs."

He then candidly mentioned another species of payment, to which they had not even adverted, and which did not, properly, relate to the public accounts, being a free gift from the foreign contingents. He stated that in the former war, the Netherlands parliament had voted 10,000*l.* a-year to the king for secret service, without account. This being found insufficient, the king, instead of applying to parliament, had obtained from the sovereigns of the foreign auxiliaries a deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on their pay, instead of all other stoppages appropriated to the same purpose. Marlborough observed that he had negotiated this agreement in the capacity of plenipotentiary, and that when he had succeeded to the command, the queen had continued the same privilege to him, to receive and employ this sum, without account, by her royal warrant, dated the 6th of July, 1702.

This sum, he adds, has been applied from time to time for intelligence and secret service, and with such success, that, next to the blessing of God, and the bravery of the troops, we may, in a great measure, attribute most of the advantages of the war in this country] to the timely and good advices procured with the help of this money.

"And now, gentlemen," he continued, "as I have laid the whole matter fairly before you, and I hope you will allow I have served my queen and country with that faithfulness and zeal which becomes an honest man, the favour that I intreat of you is, that when you make your report to the parliament you will lay this part before them in its true light, so that they may see this necessary and important part of the war has been provided for, and carried on without any other expense to the public than ten thousand pounds a-year. And I flatter myself that when the accounts of the army in Flanders come under your consideration, you will be sensible the service on this side has been carried on with all the economy and good husbandry to the public that was possible."*

To this address was annexed a copy of the royal warrant, signed by the queen, and countersigned by Sir Charles Hedges, as secretary of state.

At the same time he sent a copy of this justification, accompanied with a manly letter, to the treasurer.

"*Hague, Nov.* 10. — The friendly part your lordship took in the grievance I lately laid before you gives me encouragement to have recourse once more to your friendship, in a matter differing from the former in its circumstances, but such as, nevertheless, gives me a very sensible concern. Upon my arrival here, I had notice that my name was brought before the commissioners of accounts, possibly without any design to do me a prejudice. However, to prevent any ill impression it might make, I have writ a letter to those gentlemen, setting the matter in its true light, which Mr. Craggs will deliver; and when you have taken the pains to read the enclosed copy, pray be so kind as to employ your good offices, so as that it may be known I have the advantage of your friendship. No one knows better than your lordship the great use and expense of intelligence, and no one can better explain it; and 'tis for that reason I take the liberty to add a farther request, that you would be so kind to lay the whole, on some fitting opportunity, before the queen, being very

* This letter was printed in the Report to the House of Commons, and is to be found in all our historical publications.

well persuaded her majesty, who has so far approved, and so well rewarded my services, would not be willing they should now be reflected on.

"My lord, you see I make no scruple to give you a little trouble, which to a temper like yours rather increases than diminishes the pleasure of doing a good office. I do, therefore, boldly claim the benefit of your friendship, and am so sanguine as to expect the good effects of it, which I shall make it my constant business to deserve. The endeavours of our enemies to destroy the friendship between us will double mine to continue and improve it; and I have now the greater desire to be at home, that I may explain to you what I cannot so well write, — I mean the true sincerity wherewith I am," &c.

By the same post he forwarded another copy to his friend Godolphin, announcing his speedy return to England, and his vexation at the malignity of the libels with which he was assailed. "I am to thank you for yours of the 25th, from Newmarket, and I hope, with all my heart, you may be returned by the time I may get to London. I am resolved to take the very first opportunity, as soon as the convoy comes, which I expect every day, the wind being fair to bring them. I wish I had your good temper and judgment, for then I should not be vexed, as I now am, at the villanous libels which appear every day; but of this more when I have the happiness of being with you."

Soon after this letter was written, Marlborough gladly took his departure from the Hague, where, instead of his former distinction and consequence, he exhibited a spectacle of declining favour. Proceeding to the Brill, he embarked in company with Baron Bothmar, the Hanoverian envoy, and on the 17th of November landed at Greenwich, to encounter new disgusts and aggravated indignities.

That day being the anniversary of the inauguration of queen Elizabeth, when, according to annual custom, the effigies of the pope, the devil, and the pretender were burnt by the mob, he prudently continued at Greenwich, that he might not appear to countenance any disturbance which might arise from the tumultuous proceedings likely to occur at this critical juncture.

Early on the morning of the 18th he passed through the city, and proceeded to Hampton Court, to pay his respects to the queen. To avoid any imputation of neglect, he was assiduous in his attention to the ministers. In this instance he acted with his usual caution; for on his arrival in Lon-

don he found a general alarm pervading the metropolis, and the most injurious reflections cast on his friend Godolphin and the Whig leaders. These charges arose from the measures adopted by the government. Fearful of some tumult from the religious zeal which this procession had generally awakened, and which might produce dangerous consequences, in the actual ferment of party, the ministry had sent the messengers, with a detachment of guards, who seized the effigies prepared for the occasion, which were deposited in an empty house in Angel Court, Drury Lane, on the night of the 16th, and carried them to the office of the secretary of state, Lord Dartmouth. At the same time, either from real or from feigned apprehensions, the most serious precautions were taken to prevent a tumult, which was not unlikely to happen, from the disappointment of the populace in their usual diversion. The trained bands were called out, and kept three days under arms, and regular troops were posted, in different places, to prevent unlawful assemblies. The ministerial writers of the day did not fail to profit by this ridiculous affair, to impute to the Whigs a regular design of producing a tumult, in order to render the peace unpopular. They published an exaggerated account of the intended processions, and, reflecting on the Kit Cat Club, a Whig association, as instigators or authors of the design, gave the initials of several of the most respectable noblemen and gentlemen*, as furnishing subscriptions for this pageant,

* These initials were intended to designate Godolphin, Somers, Sunderland, Wharton, Halifax, and other principal leaders of the party. Some modern writers have strangely misunderstood and misrepresented the time and nature of these pretended conspiracies. Misconceiving the confused and garbled stories given by Macpherson from Carte, they have mixed these and other reports together, to furnish a reason for the dismission of the Duke of Marlborough. One of our writers has gravely asserted, that the duke was to profit by the confusion at the anniversary of the gunpowder plot, to assemble a select body of troops, and seize the person of the queen. It is a pity he did not recollect, that on the 5th of November the Duke of Marlborough was still in Holland; that on the 16th of November, when the ridiculous farce of seizing the effigies of the pope, the devil, and the pretender, which were to have been burnt on the morrow was enacted, he had not landed; that on the 17th he purposely remained at Greenwich; and, above all, that his dismission, which was said to be the effect of these plots and conspiracies, did not take place till the 31st of December. Others make up a new

and as intending to aggravate the tumult, by spreading a report that the queen was either dying or dead. No disturbance took place, in consequence of the precautions of government, and the figures were destroyed, after remaining three days in durance at the secretary's office, a source of real or pretended alarm to one party, and of ridicule to the other.

Marlborough was now placed in a critical situation. He had hitherto received the overtures of Oxford and St. John, with similar returns of courtesy and cordiality; first, with the view of screening himself from the accusations which the committee of inquiry had already prepared against him, and, secondly, to obtain from the queen the warrants for continuing the works at Blenheim, in which he was deeply interested, and which, he declared to Godolphin, should be the only favour he would ask from government. But the time was now arrived when he could no longer dissemble with those who dissembled, nor trust to the insidious smiles of those who courted him from interest or fear. He had now no alternative but to join cordially with the government, to the sacrifice of his principles, or, by adhering to the Whigs, to encounter ministerial enmity by a public opposition. Reduced to this alternative, he did not hesitate to follow the dictates of conscience; and, though fully aware of the fate which awaited him, he disdained to give even his tacit approbation to the degrading sacrifice, which they had offered of the national honour. He therefore boldly remonstrated with the queen against the disgraceful conditions of the preliminaries, and absented himself from the cabinet councils, which were held on the pending negotiations. His conduct naturally excited the animadversions of the ministers; and St. John observes, "I hear that in his conversation with the queen, the Duke of Marlborough has spoken against what we are doing; in short, his fate hangs heavy

version of the same idle and defamatory tale, for the eve of his dismission. It is singular that Swift in his gossiping, though interesting letters to Stella, in relating all the rumours of the day, never adverts to this story of a conspiracy in his correspondence until February 9. — See Chapter 107, in which an account is given of other imaginary conspiracies, similar to this ridiculous fiction.

upon him, and he has of late pursued every counsel which was the worst for him."*

The adherence of Marlborough to the Whigs, in which he was followed by Godolphin, and his decided opposition to the proposed conditions of peace, filled the party with sanguine hopes of success; and these hopes were increased, by a concurrence of circumstances, which seemed to forebode the disgrace of the Tory ministry.

We have already noticed the malicious cavils levelled against the financial administration of Godolphin in the report of the Commons. The unfavourable impression which they made on the public mind began to abate; for the infamous misrepresentations and exaggerated abuses were so ably refuted, that they found credit only with the partisans of the ministers. Among those who advocated the cause of the late administration, Walpole was the principal champion. In a masterly publication, entitled, "The Thirty-five Millions *accounted for*,"† he concisely and ably exposed the fallacy of the charge, which imputed to the late administration so enormous a deficit. Some of the unsettled accounts comprehended in this statement he proved to belong even to the reigns of Charles II., James II., and William; and those which concerned the late ministers, when separately examined, left a balance of only 7,557,513*l.* Even from this balance were to be deducted many disbursements, for extraordinaries during the pressure of war, which could not admit of regular vouchers, and these reduced it to four millions, for a great part of which balance accounts were brought in after the report.‡

To the same pen we likewise owe a very able tract, entitled, "The History of the last Parliament," in which the author fully justified the proceedings of the late administration, and delineated in glowing colours the portrait of the great general, who was exposed to so much unmerited obloquy.

These and other writings served to counteract the abuses

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, v. i. p. 480.

† This pamphlet was certainly written by Sir Robert Walpole, though it has been attributed to Arthur Maynwaring.—Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 6.

‡ In Somerville's Queen Anne is a sensible note on this subject, p. 418.

heaped upon the former administration by their successors; and though they did not reinstate the Whigs in the favour of the public, yet they essentially contributed to detract from the popularity of their opponents, whose measures had no longer the grace of novelty.

The accession of Lord Nottingham to their party was another source of strength.

In the last session of parliament the new ministry had a very considerable majority in the House of Commons, and sufficient weight in the upper house to ensure the approval of their measures. The Whigs, therefore, had no hopes of making a successful opposition, and acquiesced without much struggle in the decision of the majority. But in the session which assembled soon after the arrival of the duke from the continent the defection of the earl of Nottingham from the Tories, of which party he had been hitherto invariably the champion, deprived the ministry of their former preponderance. Disgusted because he did not receive those honours and rewards which he deemed his due, Nottingham made overtures for a union with the Whigs, and a compromise was effected. Each party agreed, by sacrificing something of their principles, to gratify the other, in order to turn their united strength against the ministry. The Whigs promised to support a bill of occasional conformity, which they had hitherto uniformly resisted; and the indefatigable adversary of offensive war agreed to oppose the conclusion of peace, except on the principles of the Whigs, that Spain and the Indies should be wrested from the house of Bourbon.

To give effect to these united efforts, the opposition resorted to every measure which was calculated to prevent or retard a peace. They even called in the aid of the States composing the grand alliance, to awaken the British court and people to a sense of their honour and interests.

In conformity with this plan, the Dutch, through the agency of their minister, Buys, made strong and repeated remonstrances to the queen. The new emperor followed their example, by employing both public and private exhortation to retain her in the bands of the grand alliance, and was even preparing to send Prince Eugene into England, to give additional effect to his representations.

But the deepest impression was produced by the remonstrances of the elector of Hanover, whom the queen had vainly endeavoured to lure, by warm professions of regard, and even by offering him the command of the army in the Netherlands. Baron Bothmar, his minister, presented a memorial, which was drawn up with the approbation of Marlborough and the Whigs. It enforced the necessity of preserving a good understanding among the allies, and of mutually guaranteeing their respective interests, and concluded with detailing the pernicious consequences which would ensue from suffering a prince of the house of Bourbon to retain Spain and the Indies.

Among other strong expressions, the Hanoverian minister observed, "The sentiments of his electoral highness on the peace, and on the preparatory negotiation, are, that the allies require not only positive declarations, but real securities, especially against an enemy whose methods of acting are well known. This was provided for in the former preliminaries, by obliging France to yield previously certain cautionary towns. In the present articles, on the contrary, there is neither any real security, nor any clear and distinct declaration. All is couched in indefinite, general terms, which in reality express nothing, and upon which years might be consumed in negotiating. It is left to be considered which is the surest way to put a speedy end to the war, — whether by previously exacting such conditions from France, that nothing may remain to be done in a general congress but to give them the form of a treaty, or to open that congress on terms which are captious and obscure, and which leave full scope for France to practise her usual intrigues and chicanes."

Nor is the conclusion less emphatic and forcible. "There is ground to hope, that, by remaining firmly united, the allies may soon oblige France (with the blessing of God) to agree to reasonable conditions, her extreme indigence, and need of peace, being very certain, and confirmed from all parts. The Almighty has blessed the arms of the queen and of her allies with so many triumphs over their powerful enemy, to the end they may secure themselves by a safe and advantageous peace from all their apprehensions; and it cannot be his pleasure that an enemy so exhausted and vanquished

as the king of France has been on all occasions, should at last accomplish his designs by this war, and conclude it by a peace, glorious to himself, ruinous to the victorious allies, and destructive to the liberties of all Europe, in acquiring the power of giving a monarch to Spain, of imposing another upon Great Britain, and of making the validity of the election to the crown of the empire depend on his approbation."*

CHAP. CVI. — DISMISSAL OF THE DUKE. — 1711, 1712.

As the meeting of parliament drew near, the queen and ministry were considerably alarmed at the strength of opposition, and the well-concerted efforts of the allies to obstruct the negotiations. After many ineffectual endeavours of the treasurer to gain several of the peers, the sovereign herself closeted some of the lords in opposition, particularly the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Somers, and Lord Cowper; but all her expostulations had no more effect than the conciliatory advances of her ministers. In this alarming crisis it was proposed to extend the prorogation of parliament for a few days, in order to gain time for counteracting the effects of the threatened resistance; but this expedient, being considered as indicative of degrading apprehensions, was abandoned, and parliament assembled on the 6th of December, the appointed day of meeting.

The ministry contemplated with firmness the storms of the approaching session. Confident in the support of their sovereign, and the favour of the public, they openly proclaimed their sentiments.

In the speech from the throne, the queen observed, "I have called you together as soon as the public affairs would permit, and I am glad to tell you, that notwithstanding *the arts of those who delight in war*, both place and time are appointed for opening the treaty of a general peace." After this indirect reflection on the general and the Whigs, she did not hesitate to add, what was contrary to fact, "The allies,

* History of Europe, 1711, p. 398.

and especially the States-general, have, by their ready concurrence, expressed their entire confidence in me." Having asked the customary supplies for carrying on the war with vigour, as the surest means of rendering the treaty effectual, she avowed that her chief concern was for securing the Protestant religion, and the succession to the crown, as limited by parliament to the house of Hanover. She then expressed her assurance, that no true Protestant or good subject would envy her the glory of ending a tedious and expensive war by a just and honourable peace. She anticipated the opposition which was expected from the Whigs, by recommending unanimity, adding, "that our enemies may not think us a people divided amongst ourselves, and, consequently, prevent our obtaining that good peace of which we have such reasonable hopes, and so near a view."

On descending from the throne and divesting herself of her royal robes, the queen returned *incognita* into the House, with the expectation that her presence would restrain the heats of debate; but the expedient proved ineffectual.

The earl of Ferrars having made the usual motion for an address, Nottingham suddenly rose, and opened the attack against the ministry. He censured the preliminaries as insufficient and captious, urged the express engagements which Great Britain had contracted by the grand alliance, and concluded with moving a clause, declaring that no peace could be safe or honourable if Spain and the West Indies were to be allotted to any branch of the house of Bourbon.

So direct a censure of their recent conduct, and so complete an obstacle to the pending negotiations, roused the ministerial party; but they were overwhelmed by the united force of the Whigs and discontented Tories. In the course of the debate, Lord Anglesea did not refrain from uttering a covert censure on the conduct of the Duke of Marlborough, by observing that the country might have enjoyed the blessing of peace soon after the battle of Ramilies, if it had not been deferred by some persons whose interest it was to prolong the war.

This acrimonious reflection drew forth a manly reply from the general. Rising with dignity and warmth, and bowing to the place where the queen was sitting, he made that public and manly appeal which, at the present moment, when

the petty passions of the time have ceased to operate, cannot be read without mingled sensations of shame, sympathy, and indignation.

"I appeal to the queen," he said, "whether I did not constantly, while I was plenipotentiary, give her majesty and her council an account of all the propositions that were made, and whether I did not desire instructions for my conduct on this subject. I can declare, with a good conscience, in the presence of her majesty, of this illustrious assembly, and of God himself, who is infinitely superior to all the powers of the earth, and before whom, by the ordinary course of nature, I shall soon appear, to render an account of my actions, that I was very desirous of a safe, honourable, and lasting peace, and was always very far from prolonging the war for my own private advantage; as several libels and discourses have most falsely insinuated. My great age, and my numerous fatigues in war, make me ardently wish for the power to enjoy a quiet repose, in order to think of eternity. As to other matters, I had not the least inducement, on any account, to desire the continuance of the war for my own particular interest; since my services have been so generously rewarded by her majesty and her parliament; but I think myself obliged to make such an acknowledgment to her majesty and my country, that I am always ready to serve them, whenever my duty may require, to obtain an honourable and a lasting peace. Yet I can by no means acquiesce in the measures that have been taken, to enter into a negotiation of peace with France, upon the foot of some pretended preliminaries, which are now circulated; since my opinion is the same as that of most of the allies, that to leave Spain and the West Indies to the house of Bourbon, will be the entire ruin of Europe, which I have, with all fidelity and humility, declared to her majesty, when I had the honour to wait on her after my arrival from Holland. I therefore support the motion for inserting the proposed clause in the address."

The pathos and solemnity with which he delivered this manly appeal produced a great sensation in the house; and it was warmly seconded by Cowper, Halifax, and Bishop Burnet, and only feebly opposed by the subordinate members of government. A motion for the previous question was lost by the single casting-vote of Nottingham, and the clause itself carried by a majority of 64 to 52. The address, thus altered, being presented, the queen drily answered, "I take your thanks kindly, but should be sorry that any one should think I would not do my utmost to recover Spain and the West Indies from the house of Bourbon."

To obviate the effect of this pointed and public censure, the ministerial party exerted themselves in the House of Commons, where they possessed an overwhelming majority.

A similar clause was rejected with disdain, by a majority of 232 voices against 106, and a loyal address voted, expressing their satisfaction at the declaration made by her majesty, relative to the negotiations for peace, and the highest confidence in her wisdom. A phrase was inserted in this address, conveying an oblique censure on the Duke of Marlborough, in words almost similar to those used by the earl of Anglesea in the upper house; namely, that "they would exert their utmost endeavours to disappoint, *as well the arts and designs of those who, for private views, might delight in war,* as the hopes the enemies might have vainly entertained of receiving any advantage from any division among them."

Notwithstanding this repulse in the Commons, the party in opposition, confident of their strength in the upper house, continued their hostilities against the ministers with redoubled energy. Conscious that they could not at once stem this torrent of opposition in the House of Lords, the ministers hoped to obtain time and means for disuniting this formidable phalanx. With this view they proposed to move for an adjournment till the 14th of January; but their intentions could not be concealed from their opponents, who had sufficient influence to limit it to the second.

This victory was accompanied by another proof of ascendency. On the day preceding the recess, Nottingham, with an evident intention of refuting the assertion in the speech, that all the allies placed entire confidence in the queen, moved an address. It prayed "that her majesty would be pleased to give instructions to her plenipotentiaries to consult with the ministers of the allies in Holland before the opening of the congress, that they might concert the necessary measures to preserve a strict union amongst them all, the better to obtain the great end proposed by her majesty for procuring to them all just and reasonable satisfaction, and for rendering the peace more secure and lasting, which could only be effected by a general guarantee of the terms of the peace to all the allies, and of the Protestant succession to these kingdoms, as settled by act of parliament."

The treasurer did not venture directly to oppose the principle of this motion, which he characterised as needless, because such orders had been already issued; and, if any doubt existed of the fact, the lords themselves, he said, might ap-

point a committee to examine the instructions of the plenipotentiaries. The house was satisfied with this answer, and the address was agreed to, with the introduction of a clause, "in case her majesty had not already given such orders." On the 21st the house adjourned to the 2d of January, and on the 27th the address was presented, to the surprise and mortification of the queen.

From the return of Marlborough to the meeting of the peers after the recess an awful suspense had prevailed, and the minds of the two great parties were agitated with the conflicting passions of fear and hope. Preparatory to the intended attack on the ministry, a bill of occasional conformity, which was the cement of their union, was brought into the house on the motion of Nottingham, with some modifications to satisfy his Whig allies. This bill naturally received the concurrence even of the Tories who were identified with government, and, consequently, encountered little opposition; though it was mortifying to the minister, who had always manifested a strong attachment to the dissenters, and was warmly urged by that body to oppose its enactment.

The hopes of the opposition were strengthened by the dubious conduct and timid character of the queen. Her aversion to the Whigs, her dislike of the duchess of Marlborough, and the opposition she had encountered in the disposal of civil and military offices, together with the revived attachment to her family, had induced her to dismiss the late ministers, and to appoint an administration nominally composed of Tories. But the difficulties which occurred in the negotiations abroad, the shame of deserting the principles of the grand alliance, and the checks she experienced, even from the ministers of her choice, in the nomination to the offices of her own household, excited frequent fits of discontent. This feeling was particularly called forth by the importunities of the ministry for the removal of the duke and duchess of Somerset, who had provoked their enmity; for the duke had recently acted the same part as on the trial of Sacheverell, by exerting all his influence against the ministry, and particularly in the recent discussion relative to the peace had even employed the queen's name to obtain votes in support of the clause introduced by Nottingham. The ministers justly considered this defection as a mark of decided hostility;

and not only solicited the queen for his removal, but even pressed for that of his duchess, who was zealously devoted to the Whigs, and had recently imparted to her majesty some papers and memorials which her servants had ventured to suppress. But the indiscreet zeal with which they urged their request offended a princess who was jealous of her authority, and who had been told by themselves that she had submitted to a degradation of her crown in yielding to the representations of her former servants. Indignant at restraint from those whom she considered as her liberators, she did not conceal her displeasure, and was heard to declare, that if she was to be kept in bondage she might as well have retained her former guardians as the present. She also evinced this pertinacity at a moment when it appeared decisive, as indicating a change of her sentiments. At the close of the debate on the 15th of December, in the House of Lords, in which the duke of Somerset so essentially contributed to mortify the ministry, as she was preparing to retire, the duke of Shrewsbury asked her whom she would choose to lead her out, whether himself, as lord chamberlain, or Lord Lindsay, who was hereditary great chamberlain. She peevishly and emphatically replied, "neither," and gave her hand to the duke of Somerset. Such a mark of distinction, which could not escape public and general notice, caught the vigilant attention of those who anxiously watched the appearances of the moment, and gave rise to innumerable conjectures, all to the disadvantage of the ministry. Some supposed that she began to feel reviving regard for the Duke of Marlborough; some, that his representations, backed by those of the emperor, the elector, and the Dutch, had made an impression; some, that she felt her present administration too weak to support their system, and was holding out a lure to the opposition. All these circumstances were not lost on the timid, self-interested, and wavering, and did not fail to raise the hopes of Marlborough and his friends, as much as they depressed those of the new ministry.

The Whigs were highly elated with their success, and anticipated their immediate restoration to power. It was even apprehended by the Tories that a new ministry was in contemplation, of which Lord Somers was to be the head, as lord treasurer, and in which Walpole, who is designated by

Swift as one of the ablest of the Whig speakers, was to be secretary of state. Lord Dartmouth was in despair; Mrs. Masham did not conceal her apprehensions, but allowed that the sentiments of the queen were changed; Secretary St. John declared that her majesty was false*; and even the treasurer himself, though he affected to appear cheerful, yet displayed such occasional symptoms of alarm and despondency, as induced Swift to say to him, in his usual style of sarcastic irony: "If there is no remedy, your lordship will lose your head, but I shall only be hung, and so carry my body entire to the grave."†

Such being the feelings of the favourite and the ministers, their timid or lukewarm adherents were naturally alarmed, and displayed symptoms of defection. The duke of Somerset, as we have already observed, had seceded from his new friends, and was exerting his great influence in decrying their measures. The duke of Buckingham appeared lukewarm, and scarcely showed an inclination to defend that ministry with which he was identified. Finally, the duke of Shrewsbury gave way to his characteristic timidity, declined accepting the responsible post of plenipotentiary at the congress, and began to make advances for the renewal of his friendship with the Duke of Marlborough. The whole Tory party, disconcerted by this division of their chiefs, and the successful progress of the Whigs, were agitated with doubt and despondency. Even the queen herself seemed to feel the multiplied embarrassments into which she had been plunged by personal pique and party attachment.

Nothing but a decisive and vigorous exertion of power could have saved the ministry; and the treasurer, sensible of the critical situation in which he was placed, did not hesitate to recur to the only expedient capable of ensuring his safety. He wrought on the jealousy and irritated feelings of the sovereign, and convinced her that nothing but a zealous support of her actual servants could rescue her from the bondage of the Whigs, now doubly offended by their disgrace, or from the humiliation of re-admitting to her presence an imperious favourite, whom she had loaded with scorn, and

* On the 9th St. John used this expression to Swift, but on the 12th we find him re-assured, and writing to Lord Strafford that all was secure.

† Swift's Journal to Stella, Dec. 8.

dismissed with contempt: he even desisted from requiring the removal of the duchess of Somerset, and permitted the duke to remain some time longer in office.*

The ministers were convinced that the accession of Marlborough to the coalition of the Whigs and Nottingham had principally occasioned their defeat in the House of Peers, and endangered their safety. As he had thus thrown away the scabbard he could not expect them to moderate their political hostility. Indeed, from the favourable state of their intercourse with France, they no longer contemplated the necessity of his services in another campaign, and, at least, regarded with indifference, if they did not anticipate with satisfaction, the prospect of a schism in the grand alliance, which must be the consequence of his resignation. They therefore resolved to give full scope to their vengeance, and at the same time to wound, through him, the coalition of which he was the principal bulwark. This attack was carried into execution, by suffering the commissioners of accounts to bring forward their charges of fraud and peculation, which had been first made known by circulating the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina.

No accusation is more popular, or obtains a more ready credence, than a charge founded on the mismanagement of public money. An accusation of this kind had already been levelled against Godolphin, relating to the thirty-five millions unaccounted for, and had produced a temporary effect on the minds of the nation; though it was not only afterwards disproved, but the deficit of his administration reduced, by the acknowledgment of the Commons themselves, to 20,000*l.*† A similar attack was now made against Marlborough. His reply from the Hague was not deemed satisfactory by the commissioners, who continued to prosecute their inquiry, and, with the connivance of the ministry, to

* Swift's Journal to Stella, from Dec. 1. to Dec. 30.

† This sum was employed in secret service, for the promotion of the union. Proper vouchers were, however, produced for 8000*l.*, and the distribution of the remainder, which could not be safely divulged, was justified by a warrant from the queen. Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 352. and Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 463, chap. 10., where we find an able and candid vindication of the integrity of the minister, as well as of the policy by which he was guided in the disposal of this money.

bring forward their charges in a more public and definite shape.

On the 15th of December an order passed the Commons for the commissioners of public accounts to report their proceedings. Accordingly, on the 21st, Mr. Lockhart, in their behalf, presented their report, which was brought up and taken into consideration on the 17th of January, and another order was passed, requiring the production of the documents on which their statement was founded. On the ensuing day, Shippen*, another of the commissioners, presented the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina, the contractor for bread to the allied army, accompanied by other papers of the same kind. To give the charges more effect, by clothing them with an air of mystery, the depositions were ordered to be kept private, and copies to be delivered by the clerk to the members only. Immediately afterwards an adjournment of the Commons took place on the 14th of January.

The leading feature in this memorable report was the deposition of Sir Solomon Medina, which consisted of several heads. He stated that, from 1707 to 1711, he had paid to the Duke of Marlborough, *for his own use*, on the different contracts for the army, the sum of 332,425 guilders; that he was obliged to supply yearly twelve or fourteen waggons gratis, for the use of the duke himself; that on each contract he had presented Cardonel, secretary to the duke, with a gratuity of 500 ducats; lastly, that he had paid Mr. Sweet, deputy paymaster at Amsterdam, the farther allowance of 1 per cent. on all the monies he received. He likewise deposed that Antonio Alvarez Machado, the preceding contractor, had advanced the like sums, in the same manner, from 1702 to 1706. From these data the commissioners computed that the Duke of Marlborough had received and appropriated, in the space of ten years, the sum of 664,851 guilders and 4 stivers, making, in sterling money, 63,319*l.* 3*s.* 7*d.* They then introduced the letter which the duke had addressed to them from the Hague, and concluded their report with some remarks and deductions which were flagrantly unjust, false, and erroneous. They denied that the sums, of which he had there acknowledged the receipt, were either legal or warrant-

* The reader will recollect that Shippen and Lockhart were known to be Jacobites.

able perquisites. They asserted that they could not find proofs that any English general, either in the Low Countries or elsewhere, had ever received such perquisites; but, even in that case, the precedent did not furnish a justification, because the public must necessarily suffer for every such deduction. They even proceeded to argue that the caution with which it was taken was of itself an indication that it was not justifiable, and declared that Mr. Cardonel, the duke's secretary, and auditor of the bread account, had testified on oath that he had never heard of this perquisite till the deposition of Medina was made public. They did not even refrain from the malicious insinuation that this was not the only illegal perquisite which the general had appropriated.

Adverting then particularly to the gratuity of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent from the foreign auxiliaries, they observed that the warrant for this allowance had been concealed without due reason; that it could not be a free gift, because the general himself had stipulated for it, by order of the late king, in the subsidiary treaties with the foreign powers. For these and other causes, too long to detail, they denounced the Duke of Marlborough as having illegally appropriated to his own use the sum of 282,366*l.*, computing the deduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the 11,294,659*l.* paid to all the foreign troops in the British service, or 177,695*l.*, computing the same per centage on the 7,107,873*l.* paid to the foreign auxiliaries, exclusive of those employed in Spain, Portugal, and Italy.* This sum they declared to be public money, for which, as receiver, he was accountable.†

To repel the accusations contained in this report, the letter written by the duke from the Hague was published in the daily *Courant* of the 27th of December; and as that reply seemed to make considerable impression, the report itself was printed on the 29th, in the same paper, by order of the ministers.

The publication of this document was the immediate pre-

* Some of the enemies of the duke even joined these two sums together, to make a total of 460,366*l.*, and the error is repeated by Torcy, vol. iii. p. 254.

† Journals and Debates of the Commons; Lockhart's Papers, vol. i. 351—362.

lude to his dismission. On the same or the following day he appeared at court, but was treated with marked symptoms of coldness and contempt.* Without waiting for farther investigation of a charge, which was afterwards proved, in the most material parts, to be false, the ministry profited by the impression which they conceived the report had made on the public mind. By their representations the queen was induced to appear at the cabinet council, on the 31st of December, and order this entry to be made in the books: —

"Being informed that an information against the Duke of Marlborough was laid before the House of Commons, by the commissioners of the public accounts, her majesty thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments, that the matter might undergo an impartial investigation."

The ensuing day her majesty communicated this resolution to the Duke of Marlborough, in a note written in her own hand, which is not extant, because, in a transport of indignation, he threw it into the fire.† We, however, learn the substance from his manly and feeling answer: —

"Madam, I am very sensible of the honour your Majesty does me, in dismissing me from your service, by a letter of your own hand, though I find by it that my enemies have been able to prevail with your Majesty to do it in the manner that is most injurious to me. And if their malice and inveteracy against me had not been more powerful with them than the consideration of your Majesty's honour and justice, they would not have influenced you to impute the occasion of my dismission to a false and malicious insinuation, contrived by themselves, and made public, when there was no opportunity for me to give in my answer, which they must needs be conscious would fully detect the falsehood and malice of their aspersions, and not leave them that handle for bringing your Majesty to such extremities against me.

"But I am much more concerned at an expression in your Majesty's letter, which seems to complain of the treatment you had met with. I know not how to understand that word, nor what construction to make of it. I know I have always endeavoured to serve your Majesty faithfully and

* "The Duke of Marlborough appeared at court, and no one spoke to him."—*Swift's Journal to Stella.*

† MS. Narrative of the Duchess.

zealously through a great many undeserved mortifications. But if your Majesty does intend, by that expression, to find fault with my not coming to the cabinet council, I am very free to acknowledge that my duty to your Majesty and country would not give me leave to join in the counsel of a man who, in my opinion, puts your Majesty upon all manner of extremities. And it is not my opinion only, but the opinion of all mankind, that the friendship of France must needs be destructive to your Majesty, there being in that court a root of enmity irreconcileable to your Majesty's government and the religion of these kingdoms. I wish your Majesty may never find the want of so faithful a servant as I have always endeavoured to approve myself to you. I am, with the greatest duty and submission," &c.*

The fallacy of the attempts which have often been made to inculpate the Duke of Marlborough in a criminal design to restore the Stuart race, from a few garbled letters and vague conversations, exaggerated by Jacobite spies and Jacobite writers, was fully proved by the exultation with which the exiled family contemplated his fall, and the hopes they conceived of a speedy restoration. His fidelity and zeal in the service of his country was no less strikingly evinced by the joy with which the French beheld his disgrace. Though confident in the devotion of the British ministry, Louis XIV. felt himself insecure, while the sword was in the hands of a general who had made the crown totter on his head; but, on hearing the intelligence of his fate, he triumphantly exclaimed — "The dismission of Marlborough will do all we can desire!"†

It was impossible to support so violent, harsh, and unjustifiable a measure as the disgrace of a great and successful commander on a vague and unfounded charge; while his cause was espoused by a majority of the lords; and so large a portion of the people were indignant at the dishonourable conditions on which the ministry were endeavouring to purchase a peace, after a war of unparalleled success. Another exertion of power was therefore necessary to obviate the consequences of the proceeding; and, for this purpose, the ministers did not hesitate to stretch the prerogative to its utmost limit. On the day following the disgrace of the

* Conduct, p. 311. † Somerville's Queen Anne, p. 497.

general, patents were issued for calling twelve new peers to the upper house.

On the 2nd of January, when the lords resumed their deliberations, the new peers were introduced, without opposition; but, to use the words of a contemporary historian, amidst the groans of the house. The Tories, indeed, exulted; but the sober Whigs cast their eyes to the ground, as if they had been invited to the funeral of the peerage.*

With this reinforcement the ministry obtained a majority sufficient for the prosecution of their plans; "and from this period," to continue the expressions of the same writer, "when the rights of the peers were violated, all things succeeded in parliament as her majesty, or, rather, the French monarch, pleased." In consequence of this ascendency, the lords were induced to acquiesce in the brief and sullen reply of the queen to their late address, "that her majesty thought her speech to both houses would have given satisfaction to every body, and that she had given instructions to her plenipotentiaries to act according to the desire of that address."

After the ceremony attending the introduction of the new peers, a message was delivered from the queen, desiring the house to adjourn to the 14th, the day appointed for the meeting of the Commons. So unusual a measure as a message of adjournment to one house only created a warm debate; and the resolution was carried by a majority of no more than thirteen, including the votes of the new members.† On this occasion historians have recorded a keen sarcasm, uttered by the Marquis of Wharton, who, when the question was put to the new peers, treated them as a petty jury, and asked whether they purposed to vote individually, or to convey their decision by their foreman.

* Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 399.

† One of the proxies against the adjournment was omitted by mistake, and, consequently, the question was carried solely by the aid of the new auxiliaries to the ministry.

Chap. CVII. — Charges of Peculation. — 1712.

On the 24th of January the report of the commissioners against the Duke of Marlborough was taken into consideration by the Commons, and a violent debate ensued. The charges were supported with great ability, and equal sophistry, by the Jacobites and high Tories; among whom we distinguish the names of St. John, Sir William Windham, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and Mr. Edward Harley. The duke was defended by the best speakers among the Whigs and moderate Tories, Sir Peter King, Sir Richard Onslow, Mr. Brydges, Mr. William Pulteney, and Sir Charles Hedges, who had countersigned the queen's warrant, as secretary of state. The arguments were principally drawn, on one side, from the report itself, and, on the other, from the letter written by the duke at the Hague, as well as from his private communications.

Nor was other satisfactory evidence wanting. Sir John Germaine, who had served as aide-de-camp to the Prince of Waldeck, in 1689, declared that the present received from the contractors of bread was a customary perquisite of the commander-in-chief of the British forces in the Netherlands, and that the privilege was equally extended to the general of the Dutch army. With regard to the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., it was proved to have been a voluntary gift, by the signatures of the foreign princes who had furnished auxiliary troops, and their consent was confirmed by warrants from the queen. It was likewise shown that the commissioners had swelled the sum to the utmost, and that they had invidiously brought forward the aggregate of 260,000*l.* to make the greater impression, though the yearly receipt from all the items did not exceed 30,000*l.*; while King William had expended annually 50,000*l.*, and often more, for the same purpose, and, to judge from effects, had been less faithfully served. In fact, the ministers had frequently declared that the accounts from the Duke of Marlborough were the principal sources of information on which they depended.

These plain facts were opposed, not by negative proofs, but by mere assertions, and by declamations on the abstract

principle of right and public welfare; though no evidence was adduced, that the service had suffered the detriment, which was contended to have been the consequence of the contracts and deductions. Those who are acquainted with the nature and spirit of party will not be surprised to find that, even after this complete exculpation, the Commons, by a majority of 270 against 165, should have resolved: "That the taking several sums of money, annually, by the Duke of Marlborough from the contractors for furnishing the bread and bread waggons, in the Low Countries, was unwarrantable and illegal."

An attempt was here made by the duke's friends to suspend farther proceedings. But their motion of adjournment was negatived by a considerable majority; and a second resolution was passed, declaring, "that the deduction of 2½ per cent., from the pay of the foreign troops in her majesty's service, is public money, and ought to be accounted for." These resolutions were communicated, in an address to the queen, who replied, "I have a great regard for whatever is presented to me by my Commons, and will do my part to redress whatever you complain of."

These violent prosecutors, and zealous stewards of the public, seem, however, rather to have regarded effect, than the regular course of justice; for they contented themselves with this resolution, which obtained an order from the queen for the attorney-general to prosecute the duke; although they did not proceed to an impeachment, or desire the concurrence of the Lords. And if we may credit the assertions of a contemporary historian, their forbearance did not originate in any compunctious feeling, but from a resolution to continue the very perquisites, which they had so severely reprobated, to their creature, the new commander-in-chief.*

To give additional effect to this prosecution, they next descended to the secretary and agent of the duke; and, after a long debate, declared the petty gratuity of 500 ducats, given by the contractor for bread to Mr. Cardonel, unwarrantable and illegal, and expelled him from the house. They at the same time decreed the prosecution of Mr. Sweet, for the annual deduction of one per cent., though it was proved to be a customary fee to the paymaster of the forces.

* Cunningham, vol. ii. book 14.

In consequence of the malignity and violence with which the charges had been advanced in the report of the commissioners, and the invidious and shameful suppression of the proofs in his defence, Marlborough was urged to appear in the House of Commons, like Lord Somers, and enter into a full refutation of the calumnies contained in the report.* But he disdained to submit to a measure which he considered as an act of degradation, and as a tacit acknowledgment of the crimes of which he was accused. He, however, consented to allow a vindication of himself to be drawn up in a regular form, and publicly circulated. This able composition will spare us the labour of refuting the charges of the commissioners, and the arguments with which they were supported; and, therefore, we refer the reader to the document itself, which is printed in all our historical publications. We shall merely observe, that it proved both the partiality and the negligence with which the report had been drawn. First, it contradicted the false assertion, that Cardonel had attested on oath, his ignorance that the duke had received any perquisite from Medina; secondly, it exposed the shameful equivocation of the commissioners, in stating, that *no English* general in the Low Countries, before the Duke of Marlborough, had received the perquisite; for he was the *first English general who had commanded in the Low Countries.*

This vindication made a deep impression on the public, and even on many of those members who had voted against him. Indeed, his prosecutors meanly shrunk from the controversy; for, instead of declaring it a libel, which was a measure due to their own dignity, if it was false, they suffered it to remain unanswered.

They afterwards adopted one of those inconsistent measures, into which persons who are not perfectly satisfied with the soundness and regularity of their proceedings, generally fall. In granting the vote of supply, they added the resolution, that the two and a half per cent., which ought to be deducted, or had been deducted from the pay of the foreign troops, should be applied to the public service; a

* A speech on the occasion, drawn up in the hand-writing of Lord Godolphin, is preserved in the Marlborough Papers.

resolution totally unnecessary, if the transaction was unprecedented, unwarrantable, or illegal.

But they felt a still greater degree of embarrassment, when several of the foreign princes spontaneously treated the resolution of the House of Commons as an infringement of their sovereign rights, and represented, by their ministers, that they offered this contribution, as their own free gift, to the duke of Ormond, the new commander-in-chief. It was accepted on his part, without any scruple of conscience, and not marked by any disapprobation from parliament.

Marlborough had continued so firm in his opposition to the peace, that the new ministers exerted their ingenuity to carry their prosecution against him to the utmost extremity. They made the minutest inquiry into the disposal of commissions, with the hope of fixing an additional stigma on his character. But though abuses had existed in this branch of the service during the reign of William, and had even been considered as a justifiable perquisite, all the vigilance of enmity and party spleen could not discover a single instance on which to found an accusation. This failure seems to have excited no small degree of surprise and disappointment, and tended to weaken the charge of peculation, in which the ministry had laboured to involve him.

In the midst of the ferment created by this prosecution, Prince Eugene arrived in England, charged with proposals from the emperor, which were calculated to disconcert the schemes of the ministry, and to turn the tide of public opinion.

We have already seen, that in 1710 both Marlborough and Godolphin had flattered themselves with the hope of drawing great advantage from the personal interposition of Eugene; and had he visited England at that period his presence might doubtless have especially contributed to remove their embarrassments, and suspend the overtures to France. Being, however, then detained at Vienna, by the pressure of military and political business, the design of his journey was resumed at the present crisis, with the expectation that his mediation might yet produce the same effect; and that propositions from the emperor, to continue the war, when urged by the weight of his solicitations, might perhaps interrupt the negotiations for peace, and turn the balance in

favour of the Whigs. Both parties, therefore, contemplated the prospect of his arrival with equal anxiety, though with opposite sentiments of fear and hope. To prevent or retard it, the ministers exerted every effort in their power. Finding, however, all their attempts ineffectual, they sullenly acquiesced; but intimated to him, that measures would be taken to frustrate any intrigue with the opposition, and that the less attention he paid to the Duke of Marlborough, the more satisfactory would his conduct be deemed by the queen.*

On the 5th of January, the prince landed at Gravesend, and the first intelligence which met his ear was, the dismission of the Duke of Marlborough, and the creation of twelve peers, which restored the ascendency of the ministerial party in the House of Lords. Drummond, the dependant of St. John, who was sent to receive him, presumed to give the same caution, as had before been intimated, respecting his conduct to his former associate in glory; but he repelled the insinuation with proper dignity: "It is a mistake," he observed, "to suppose that I came to England with an intention to give the least disturbance to the ministry; but it is wholly inconsistent with my honour and temper, to be wanting in respect to a friend, in his adverse fortune, for whom I always professed so much regard in the time of his prosperity." On reaching London he took up his abode in Leicester House, which was prepared for his reception. He was welcomed in the customary forms, by the ministers of all denominations, and received a visit from the Duke of Marlborough, whom he treated with peculiar marks of friendship and regard. From the court, he experienced every external mark of respect; but without the slightest token of confidence and esteem.

Eugene was admitted to an audience of the queen on the ensuing evening, at which only the treasurer and secretary St. John were present. With a short and appropriate compliment, he delivered a letter from the emperor, requesting her majesty to peruse it, as explaining the object of his mission. After slightly glancing over the paper, she said; "I am sorry that the state of my health does not permit me to speak with your highness as often as I wish; but," (point-

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, *passim.*

ing to the ministers,) she added, "I have ordered these two gentlemen to receive your proposals, whenever you think proper." At a future audience, she honoured him with the present of a sword, richly set with diamonds, to the value of 4500*l.*

All ranks vied in their attentions to so distinguished a guest, and he was welcomed by a series of splendid entertainments from persons of every party.

There is no proof that the prince descended to any cabal inconsistent with the dignity of his character; on the contrary, he laboured to gain the leading men of all denominations, and to animate the court and country to a vigorous prosecution of hostilities. He visited both parties with equal attention, and treated those the most opposed to him, in principle and views, with the same outward regard and consideration, as the partisans of the war. But he gave his confidence to the Whigs, and did not hesitate to assist at their meetings. In his conduct to the Duke of Marlborough, he consulted only the sentiments of that friendship by which they had been so long united; and, by his behaviour, endeavoured to show that the respect he entertained for his talents and services was increased, instead of being diminished, by disgrace. He treated the libels, which were published against himself, with dignified contempt, but did not conceal his indignation at the defamation which was hourly heaped on his former colleague, and omitted no opportunity to do justice to his merits. At a dinner with the lord treasurer, his host observed, "I consider this day as the happiest of my life, since I have the honour to see in my house the greatest captain of the age." The prince, alluding to the dismission of his friend, replied, "If it be so, I owe it to your lordship." Bishop Burnet also, having explained to him a passage in one of the libellous pamphlets of the day, stating that the Duke of Marlborough was perhaps *once fortunate*, he rejoined, "It is the greatest commendation which can be given; for he was always successful, and this must imply, that if in *one* single instance he was fortunate, all his other successes were owing to his conduct."*

The prince made many attempts to open a negotiation on the subject of his mission, though without effect. Aware of

* Burnet's History of his Own Time, vol. vi. p. 116. 8vo. edition.

the prejudices which the ministers fostered against the house of Austria, and the confident assertions of their numerous pamphleteers, that the emperor had never supplied his contingents in men or money, but had thrown the whole burthen of the war on England, he presented a spirited memorial in vindication of his sovereign. In this paper, he declared that the emperor would double his contingents, if necessary; would maintain 103,920 men in the field; would augment his forces in Spain to the number of 30,000, and supply one million of crowns towards the expenses of the war in that country. Receiving, however, an equivocal answer from the secretary, he presented a second memorial, on the 18th of February, which soon afterwards appeared in the public papers, and was followed by others, addressed to the ministry, requesting a categorical answer.

Finding that delays and equivocations were fruitless, the ministry adopted a different method to evade his appeals. On the 26th of February, the secretary imparted the proposals of the emperor, in a message from the queen to the House of Commons, and Eugene had the mortification of hearing that the communication was received without the slightest notice.*

The presence of the prince of Savoy, and his strong and urgent representations, together with his intimate connection with Marlborough and the Whigs, greatly embarrassed the ministry. Knowing that the articles of the peace, on the conclusion of which their existence depended, would, when published, excite a general ferment, they resorted to the most degrading expedients to work on the feelings of the queen and the fears of the public.

For this purpose, they employed the communications of a miscreant Jesuit spy, named Plunket, who had officiously furnished them with tales of pretended plots, in which Eugene, Marlborough, Bothmar, and the principal Whigs, were to act the part of traitors and assassins, to set fire to the capital, to seize the person of the queen, to murder Oxford and his chief associates, and to place the elector of Hanover on the throne. At the same time, the drunken frolics of some persons of rank, who mixed with the rabble,

* Chandler's Commons' Debates, vol. iv. p. 461.—History of Europe for 1712, p. 104—108.

and, under the name of Mohocks, scoured the streets at night, and occasionally mangled unprotected passengers, were brought forward as the first overt acts of treason, and identified with the pretended conspiracy of Eugene and Marlborough.

Oxford and St. John were too prudent to make these ridiculous tales a matter of state deliberation; but the officious Jesuit, who was disappointed by their neglect, found more credulous auditors in the duke of Buckingham, president of the council, and lord keeper Harcourt. To them he forwarded the same accounts which he had delivered to the treasurer, enriched doubtless with additional details. These noblemen, duped by his confident assertions, and plausible reports, submitted the intelligence to the cabinet council. But Oxford, however willing to affix a stigma on his political opponents, was conscious that such an idle and exaggerated tale, supported by so slender a foundation, would, if made public, produce a contrary effect, and involve the ministry in the charge of credulity and defamation. He, therefore, dissuaded his credulous and terrified colleagues from imparting it to the parliament, or making it public; but he could not prevent the examination of Plunket before the cabinet council. Here the Jesuit repeated the same story, with such observations as were likely to give it additional weight, and received the promise of a provision, and an order to reduce his intelligence to writing.* At his own suggestion he was sent to Holland, to gain additional information from Count Gallas, into whose confidence he pretended to have insinuated himself, and to bring the person from whom he affected to have received the original intelligence. Before his departure, he furnished an abstract of his communications; but on his arrival in Holland, he evaded his pledge to produce his pretended colleague, under the plea that he would not repair to England, without the promise of a maintenance. According to his own confession, he busied himself with forming plans for promoting the interest of the pretender, and was admitted, not only into the confidence of the French plenipotentiaries, D'Uxelles and Polignac, and of the marquis of Torcy, but even of the leading members in the Dutch

* The communications of Plunket are printed in their original shape in Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 146. note.

republic; and was intrusted with the secret correspondence of the Whigs and the court of Hanover. After a short period, however, he seems to have been abandoned by all, and finally neglected by Oxford, who, as he complains, ceased to listen to his communications.

We have paid more attention to this supposed conspiracy, a story at once infamous and ridiculous, because it had been made the basis of an accusation of the most horrid kind, against Eugene, Marlborough, Bothmar, and the leaders of the Whigs, and gravely detailed by some of our subsequent historians. Fortunately, however, we can trace the origin and progress of this base fabrication, which was unknown to the writers of the time. It was first disclosed in the Memoirs of Torcy, printed in 1756; but, in justice to the French secretary, we must observe, that it is described as a mere rumour, and coupled with marks of disbelief.* The tale was treated as it deserved in the Continuation of Rapin, published by Dr. Birch, in 1756†, but it was again offered to the notice of the public in 1758, in Swift's posthumous History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne, a work of which it is needless to give any other character, than that his friend Bolingbroke prevented its publication, calling it a mere party pamphlet. Here the hearsay of Torcy assumes a regular and formidable shape, and the malignity of Swift is shown in the description. He insinuates that the Duke of Marlborough had fixed his arrival in London on the 17th of November, the day of the intended exhibition, which he states to have been contrived, for the purpose of raising a commotion, by his friends and admirers. He adverts to the pretended report of the queen's illness or death, and gravely

* On a fait honneur au Prince Eugene d'avoir rejetté un projet si odieux; mais la proposition plus hardie *qu'on lui attribue*, étoit encore plus à detester. Elle consistoit, *si l'on en croyoit des gens peut être mal informés*, à mettre le feu en differens quartiers de la ville de Londres, &c. Marlborough, à la tête d'un nombre de gens armés, devoit survenir dans le moment que l'incendie causeroit le plus de desordre, et se saisir de la Tour, enfin de la personne de la reine, qu'on auroit obligée alors de cesser le parlement, d'en convoquer un nouveau, pour examiner librement les correspondences et negotiations avec la France, et punir à la dernière rigueur ceux qui les auroient entretenues. — *Mem. de Torci*, t. iii. pp. 268, 269.

† Vol. xvii. p. 468, note, 8vo.

adds, "*if it were true*, no man could tell what might have been the event." With this he couples the account of the supposititious conspiracy. He describes Eugene as one who had a *natural tincture of Italian cruelty in his disposition*, and in whom the occupation of arms had extinguished *all pity and remorse*. He mentions his meetings with Marlborough and the Whigs, and then gives the account of the treasons and assassinations which they projected, after the preparatory excesses and cruelties of the Mohocks. This, he tells us, is not founded *on slight grounds, or doubtful surmises*, but is derived from the information of more than one person, who was present, and confirmed, past all contradiction, by *several intercepted* letters. To complete the atrocious picture, he adds, "the rage of the defeated party was so far inflamed as to make them capable of some counsels, yet more violent and desperate than this."*

We shall merely apply to this malignant writer an expression corresponding with that which he has himself applied to Prince Eugene; namely, that he was one in whom the feelings of party had extinguished all regard for candour, and all respect to truth.

Next, the public was regaled with the full and complete detail of this fabricated plot, by Macpherson, who, in 1775, published the narrative of the spy himself, under the title of Rogers's or Plunket's Dream, and in 1776, interwove it in his history, with as much credulity and malice as Swift himself.†

We cannot quit this unpleasant subject without a few more remarks. The whole foundation of this atrocious calumny is derived from so polluted a source, as the obscure Jesuit and Jacobite spy, who afterwards followed the trade of an informer and propagator of falsehood, in the reign of George I. To his information Torcy was indebted, as is clear by the words he employs; and from the same despicable authority Swift obtained his statements, notwithstanding "his additional notices drawn from subsequent testimonies and intercepted letters;" for he adopts the very words of Plunket's abstract, which he probably derived from Secretary St. John.

With regard to the correspondence and documents of

* Swift's Four last Years of Queen Anne, p. 59.

† Macpherson's Papers, vol. ii. p. 451. — History, vol. ii. p. 531.

Plunket, published by Macpherson, they furnish sufficient evidence to form a proper estimate of his character and views, and enable us to judge how unworthy his reports are of the slightest credit. It is, however, lamentable that the reputation of great men should thus lie at the mercy of obscure and mercenary spies, who make a trade of falsehood and mischief; and it is the duty of an historian to hold up the authors and propagators of such reports to the contempt and infamy they deserve. This motive, alone, could have induced us to devote a page to the refutation of calumnies so contemptible.

The accounts, however incredible and infamous, produced all the effect which the treasurer desired, by increasing the panic of the queen, aggravating her displeasure against the Duke of Marlborough, and exciting her anxiety for the departure of Eugene, and the conclusion of peace.

Eugene, in the mean time, felt the ill effects of the prejudice which had been raised against him; and finding all his proposals treated with neglect by the queen and ministers, retired with disgust from a country distracted with party feuds, neglectful of its best interests, and hastening to accomplish its own dishonour. He embarked at Greenwich on the 17th March, and returned to Holland, to deplore the farther result of the disgraceful policy which he had witnessed in England.

Having thus contemptuously treated the emperor, as head of the grand alliance, and rejected the proposals of Eugene, the ministers loaded with no less indignity the Dutch, with whom England had been long identified in bands of interest and amity.

The reader will have perceived from the correspondence of Marlborough during the whole course of the war, his extreme anxiety to retain in strict union the members of the grand alliance. Knowing well the embarrassed situation of the Austrian finances, the struggle of contending factions in Holland, the spirit of commercial jealousy, which existed between England and the republic, and the constant bickerings between the courts of Vienna and Turin, he laboured to restrain the murmurs of the English cabinet, and to excuse the deficiency of the supplies and contingents, which the allies had promised to furnish. He overlooked also the

endless disappointments to which he was himself exposed. In his zeal to attain the great end of the confederacy, the reduction of French preponderance, he incessantly endeavoured to conciliate those jarring interests and interminable jealousies which are inseparable from an extensive coalition of different powers, embarked in a common cause. The effect of this policy was, the progressive decline of France, and the gradual ascendency of the allies; and if his views had not been counteracted by the change of ministry, and the court of France had not been encouraged to persevere, by the divisions in England, the consequence must inevitably have been, the attainment of an honourable and secure peace, on the terms dictated by the allies. It was, indeed, the conviction of Marlborough, that the humiliation of France had been delayed by the domestic feuds in England, and his opinion is corroborated by the avowal of Torcy and the French writers, that France was saved by our disgraceful party contests.

The views and policy of the new ministers were totally different. Sensible that they could not support themselves without the assistance of the French cabinet, and the co-operation of the court of St. Germain, they determined to sacrifice every object for the attainment of a speedy peace. Hence they were anxious to divide the members of the grand alliance, and to break that connection which subsisted between Holland, England, and Austria. With this view, they eagerly profited by those defections in furnishing their quota, of which the Dutch and Austrians had exhibited frequent instances. They laboured also to excite that commercial jealousy, which they knew was fostered in England, against the trade and resources of the republic. Their dependent writers were encouraged to make these subjects the theme of invective, and the able, though sophistical pen of Swift was employed with effect in deluding the public mind.*

When these misrepresentations had made the expected impression, the ministry themselves came forward to give it the sanction of public authority. Indeed, we trace in the earliest correspondence of St. John the germ of those com-

* The most celebrated of his productions on this head were, the "Conduct of the Allies," and the "Account of the Barrier Treaty."

plaints, which were afterwards expanded into a solemn and national charge.

In the commencement of February the attack was formally begun in the House of Commons, by censuring the conduct of the Dutch, in failing to supply their stipulated quotas of troops and money, and by greatly exaggerating the real deficiency. The barrier treaty was also stigmatised as an infamous compact, and as a total dereliction of the British interest for the sake of Holland. These complaints were embodied in a series of resolutions, which were presented to the sovereign, and terminated with the declaration, "That Lord Townshend was unauthorised to conclude several of the articles of the barrier treaty, and that all who advised its ratification were enemies to the queen and kingdom."

So severe an invective drew from the States a spirited, but respectful letter to the queen, which was followed by a long memorial, in refutation of the charges, and in vindica- of the barrier treaty. The English Commons did not, however, choose to meet the refutation; but maintained their resolutions, by voting the memorial itself a false, scandalous, and malicious libel; and ordering those by whom it was printed and published in England to be taken into custody for a breach of privilege. Such a solemn decision of the legislature increased the impression which had been already made on the public mind; and the house of Austria and the Dutch became the objects of that odium which had hitherto been solely directed against the common enemy.

CHAP. CVIII. — CONFERENCES OF UTRECHT. — 1712.

DURING these transactions the conferences for the negotiations of peace were opened at Utrecht; and the result was such as was naturally to be anticipated from the conduct of England. The grand principle of the alliance had already been abandoned, by the separate preliminaries clandestinely signed with Mesnager, on the 23d of October; and the proceedings of the British cabinet reduced all the allies to the

necessity of presenting their claims individually, instead of embodying in one series of articles the united interests of the whole confederacy. Besides, the example of ill faith which they had recently manifested, had sown the germs of jealousy, suspicion, and discord; for each member of the alliance, instead of promoting the common interest, was anxious to attain its own particular object, at the expense of the rest.

While the British plenipotentiaries were embarrassed by the contradictory or equivocal orders of their own government *, the members of the confederacy presented extravagant and inadmissible demands, with a view to obstruct the progress of the negotiation. Louis was thus enabled to play on the hopes and fears of all, and encouraged even to rise in his pretensions; for, on the 11th of February, the French plenipotentiaries delivered a new series of proposals.

Spain and the Indies were to remain in the possession of Philip; of the exterior provinces, the Netherlands were to

* As a specimen of these equivocal orders, we shall here insert an article in the instructions to the British plenipotentiary: —

"If it shall be thought proper to begin by the disposition of the Spanish monarchy, you are to insist that the security and the reasonable satisfaction which the allies expect, and which his most Christian majesty has promised, cannot be obtained, if Spain and the West Indies be allotted to any branch of the house of Bourbon. And in case the enemy should object, as the imperial ministers have done, that the second article of the seven, signed by the Sieur Mesnager, implies that the duke of Anjou shall continue on the throne of Spain, you are to insist that those articles, as far as they extend, are, indeed, binding to France; but that they lay neither us, nor our allies, under any positive obligation. That they were received only as inducements for opening of the conferences, and that an agreement to take measures for preventing the crowns of France and Spain from being ever united upon one head, cannot be construed, by any means, to imply that the latter should remain to the present possessor; since, by the sixth article of the preliminaries made in 1709, this very point was insisted upon, although, in the same preliminaries, it was agreed that the duke of Anjou should abandon the throne in Spain. In treating, therefore, upon this head, you are to consider, and settle, in conjunction with our allies, the most effectual measures for preventing the crowns of France and Spain from being *ever* united *on one head;* and the conditions, which shall be agreed as necessary to this effect, you are peremptorily to insist upon." — Instructions to the Lord Privy Seal, viz. the bishop of Bristol, contained in Secretary St. John's letter, Dec. 28. 1711.—*Bolingbroke's Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 93.

be consigned to the elector of Bavaria; and all the Italian dominions, except Sicily, which was reserved for future discussion, were to be yielded to the emperor. In return for this arrangement, the title of the queen and the Protestant succession were to be acknowledged, on the signature of peace; and the Spanish Netherlands, as transferred to the elector of Bavaria, were to be considered as a barrier for the Dutch, who were allowed to garrison such of the towns as they might deem proper at the expense of the country. Under the plea of augmenting this barrier, Furnes, Knoque, Ypres, and Menin, were to be ceded by the French, in exchange for Aire, St. Venant, Bethune, and Douay; and for the rasure of Dunkirk, which had been so peremptorily demanded by England, the restoration of Lille and Tournay was required. Towards the empire and Italy, the frontier was to remain the same as at the commencement of the war, by which France would retain, on the side of the Rhine, Landau and Friburg; and on that of the Alps, Exilles and Fenestrelles.

Proposals so contradictory, not only to the principles of the grand alliance, but to the clandestine preliminaries already signed by the British ministry, awakened the deepest feelings of surprise and indignation. The Whigs were roused, and even the warmest adherents of the government could not conceal their chagrin and mortification, at a result so different from the hopes they had been suffered to entertain.

The consequence of the prevailing sentiment was an animated address, moved in the House of Peers by Lord Halifax, on the 15th of February. It expressed surprise and indignation at the terms offered by France to the queen and her allies, and testified their readiness to support her majesty, with zeal and affection, and with their lives and fortunes, in carrying on the war in conjunction with her allies, till a safe and honourable peace could be secured. The ministers shrunk from a question which involved an investigation of their own conduct, and suffered the address to be carried without a division. Even the answer from the throne manifested their embarrassment; for the queen delivered a dry and formal reply, merely thanking the house for their zeal and assurances of support.

Oxford and St. John felt that they could not connive at

the encroaching spirit of France, or submit to demands which were to be expected only from a victorious enemy. The secretary laboured, therefore, to infuse his own fears into the French cabinet, and to convince them, that any farther attempt to trifle with a high-spirited nation might again produce the mischiefs from which they had recently escaped. In communicating the instructions arising out of this event to the British plenipotentiaries, he observes, "The French will see that there is a possibility of reviving the love of war in our people, by the indignation which has been expressed at the plan given in at Utrecht."

A continuance of the negotiation in the same mode was evidently too dangerous to be risked; and, therefore, no alternative remained, but to accept the overtures of Torcy, for the establishment of a private and entire correspondence between the plenipotentiaries of the two crowns, in order to settle the conditions of peace, without the intervention of others, and then to dictate terms to the other allies.

At the moment when this arrangement was made to suspend the public negotiations, a melancholy catastrophe in the royal family of France produced new and unexpected embarrassments.

Louis XIV. had now reached his 73d year, and at the close of a long and disastrous war, had seen the divisions of his enemies turned to his advantage; and, instead of receiving the law of the conqueror, had been nearly enabled to dictate his own conditions. Suffering under the bodily infirmities incident to advanced age, he was anxious to hasten the conclusion of a negotiation which was to give peace to his distracted country, and to fix the crown of Spain in his family. In the preceding year he had lost his only son, the dauphin; but in his grandson, the duke of Burgundy, he beheld the solace of his old age, and the future blessing of his subjects. This pious and amiable prince, who was now in the bloom of youth and health, was united with a young and beautiful wife, who had borne him two sons, and was likely to be the fruitful mother of a numerous offspring. In the midst of these auspicious appearances, the monarch was suddenly involved in the deepest affliction: he was doomed, in the decline of life, to behold his descendants swept away, and that peace, which was so necessary for himself, his king-

doms, and his family, in danger of being wrested from his grasp.

On the 12th of February the young dauphiness was hurried to the grave, by a malignant fever, in the 27th year of her age; on the 18th her disconsolate husband fell a victim to the same disorder. In a few days the elder of their two sons was entombed with his parents, and the survivor, a sickly infant in the cradle, was in the most imminent danger.

The aged monarch supported these accumulated losses with the firmness of a man and the piety of a Christian: he did not suffer his grief to vanquish his judgment, or suppress his zeal for the safety of his kingdom. Without a moment's delay, he proceeded to regulate the succession, now become a matter of difficult arrangement, and laboured to tranquillise the alarms of his friends in England, who saw in the sickly infant the only bar to the union of the crowns of France and Spain, on the head of Philip, the presumptive heir.

In this unexpected predicament, additional motives impelled the British ministry to continue their clandestine negotiation. The general conferences at Utrecht were immediately suspended, and an amicable discussion took place between the two cabinets, on the important question connected with these melancholy events. To prevent the union of the two crowns in the same person, the queen demanded that Philip should renounce either Spain or France. Louis himself was no less anxious to avert from his country the evils of a disputed succession, and the renewal of that war which had been so disastrous to himself and to his subjects.

After many difficulties and discussions, Philip refused to relinquish the crown of Spain; and Louis and his ministers unequivocally declared, that, by the French law, he could not abandon his title to the succession of France. In this dilemma, the ministers had no alternative, but to continue the war with accumulated risk, or to accept a condition, which the French court frankly pronounced to be nugatory.* They obtained, however, a promise that such a renunciation should be formally made and guaranteed in France and Spain; and, on this frail security, prepared to lay the basis of peace, and the future tranquillity of Europe. They even entered

* See this subject fully treated in the Memoirs of the Bourbon Kings of Spain, chap. 19.

into a private stipulation to desert their allies, if they could not alarm or allure them into the acceptance of these conditions. To obviate the effect of their opposition, they agreed to a future suspension of arms for two months, and in return for the temporary cession of Dunkirk, promised that the British troops, and their auxiliaries, should withdraw from the contest. To tempt the Dutch to follow their example, Ypres was offered to the republic, on the same terms as Dunkirk to England.

This dishonourable compromise at once rendered null all the mighty preparations which had been concerted by the allies to carry on the war with increasing vigour; but it was managed with so much address and mystery as not even to be communicated to the duke of Ormond, the new commander of the British forces; for on his arrival at the Hague he gave the strongest assurances that he was empowered to co-operate, to the fullest extent, with the confederate army; and that his royal mistress was resolved to prosecute the war with redoubled energy.

The conduct of England, however, had awakened such suspicions in the Dutch government, that they appointed Prince Eugene their generalissimo, in preference to Ormond, and withheld from him all communication on the plans of the campaign, referring him to the prince and their field deputies.

Eugene had, in April, already assembled a larger force than he had ever before ranged under his banners; and the Dutch had followed this spirited example, in the full supply of their contingent. The imperial general had also concerted with the deputies, arrangements for carrying into execution the plan so ably conceived by his disgraced colleague in the preceding campaign, in which he trusted the duke of Ormond would concur. Leaving the larger places of Cambray and Arras, he purposed to besiege Quesnoy and Landrecies at the same time, an enterprise which he hoped to bring to a speedy termination. This conquest having broken the last link in the French barrier, he intended to pour his victorious force into the open provinces, and speedily reduce the enemy to accept the terms which they had repeatedly rejected.

At this critical period he had the satisfaction to hail the arrival of Ormond, and to ascertain that the collective force

of the confederate troops did not amount to less than 145 battalions, and 295 squadrons; forming an aggregate of 122,000 effective men, with 120 cannon, 16 howitzers, and 40 pontoons. Such an accumulation of force had already carried dismay into the court and cabinet of Louis.

Notwithstanding the servility which the French monarch had experienced from the British ministry, he could not contemplate the movements of this mighty host without alarm. The army of Villars, the last hope of France, amounted only to 100,000 men, ill equipped, scantily supplied with artillery, and bereft of confidence by a series of unparalleled defeats. It was to be dreaded that one of those accidents, which are above all human control, might produce a conflict, which could not fail to prove disastrous, with forces so unequally opposed; and the immediate and least dangerous consequence was, the fall of the capital, and all the provinces north of the Loire. Some of the courtiers even urged their aged monarch to withdraw to Blois; but though borne down by grief and infirmity, Louis was not depressed by misfortune. In taking leave of Villars, he observed, "Behold my situation. Few instances have occurred of calamities like mine, to lose, in so short a space of time, my grandson, his consort, and their eldest son; all hopeful, and tenderly beloved." Suppressing his sorrows, he then adverted to the state of his army, and the representations which had been made to abandon his capital, in order to avoid the danger attending a defeat. He added, "Armies so considerable as mine are seldom completely routed; and the greater part may retire to the Somme. I know that river; it is difficult to pass, and there are still fortresses which may be rendered defensible. Should such a misfortune occur, I will instantly go to Peronne or St. Quintin, collect all my troops, and with you will risk a last effort, determined to perish or save the state."* Such, indeed, must have been the fatal alternative, to which all the intrigues, encroachments, and usurpations of Louis must have led, had he not drawn greater advantage from the divisions and misconduct of his enemies, than from the colossal power which had once overshadowed Europe.

Unfortunately, the measures of the queen and ministry frustrated the lingering hopes which the lovers of their

* Mémoires de Villars, t. ii. p. 197.

country still ventured to entertain. For, at the very moment when the British general joined Eugene at Tournay, he received a communication from St. John, dated April 25, enjoining him to be jealous of his colleague, and directing him, in the name of the queen, to be cautious in engaging in an action, unless in the case of a very apparent and considerable advantage, under the plea that he should wait till he was strengthened by the arrival of all the imperial troops.* But even now, Ormond probably did not suspect the scheme of treachery of which this was the commencement; for he appeared eager to signalise his military command. To the anxious inquiries of Eugene, whether he had authority to co-operate vigorously in the campaign, he replied, that he was invested with the same powers as the Duke of Marlborough, and was ready to join in attacking the enemy. In consequence of this reply, arrangements were made for forcing the hostile camp, and besieging Quesnoy.

But these operations were suspended by subsequent instructions from the British cabinet. The critical points of the negotiation having been partly settled, and the renunciation by Philip of either France or Spain solemnly promised, and that promise guaranteed by Louis, mystery was no longer necessary. Secretary St. John, therefore, on the 10th of May, communicated these specific orders to the duke of Ormond: —

"Her majesty, my lord, has reason to believe that we shall come to an agreement upon the great article of the union of the two monarchies, as soon as a courier, sent from Versailles to Madrid, can return. It is, therefore, the queen's positive command to your grace, that you avoid engaging in any siege, or hazarding a battle, till you have farther orders from her majesty. I am, at the same time, directed to let your grace know, that the queen would have you disguise the receipt of this order; and her majesty thinks that you cannot want pretences for conducting yourself, so as to answer her ends, without owning that, which might at present have an ill effect, if it was publicly known. The queen cannot think with patience of sacrificing men, when there is a fair prospect of attaining her purpose another way; and, besides, she will not suffer herself to be exposed to the reproach of having retarded, by the events of the campaign, a negotiation which might otherwise have been as good as concluded, in a few days. I shall very soon despatch another express to your grace, and am, &c.

"P. S. I had almost forgot to tell your grace, that communication is

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 319.

made of this order to the court of France; so that if the marshal de Villars takes, in any private way, notice of it to you, your grace will answer accordingly."*

In consequence of these instructions, Ormond soon afterwards entered into a secret correspondence with Villars, and declaring that they were no longer enemies, obviated the alarms which the French general might have conceived, at the approach of the confederates, by announcing that the future movements of the troops under his own command were intended merely for forage and subsistence, not for offensive operations.

In the midst of this clandestine intercourse, the allied forces had passed the Scheldt, and took post between Noyelles and the Braise, the quarters of Ormond being at Solenne, and those of Eugene at Haspre, with the apparent purpose of approaching the enemy, who were posted between Câtelet and Cambray, on the other side of the Scheldt.

Suspecting, however, the treachery of his colleague, Eugene took an immediate opportunity to put his sincerity to the test. The reconnoitring parties having reported that the situation of the enemy was open and exposed, the imperial commander made the requisite preparations; and on the morning of the 28th of May solicited Ormond to concur in an attack of the hostile camp. This proposal at once disclosed the disgraceful situation in which the British commander was placed. He was confounded by the summons: and after making a futile excuse till noon, sent an evasive answer, requesting that the design might be postponed for some days. His reply exhibited all the treachery practised by the British ministry. Eugene and the Dutch deputies warmly protested against such dishonourable conduct; but, anxious to draw the utmost advantage from the presence of the British troops, he proposed to besiege Quesnoy. Ormond felt too much humbled to object to this solicitation; and, as Villars had made a retrograde movement, the investment took place the same day.

This proceeding exciting universal indignation, complaints and remonstrances were preparing from every quarter; while the intelligence being speedily conveyed to England, by the

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 320.

expostulatory letters of Prince Eugene, the sensation was scarcely less deeply felt than at the army.

Hitherto Marlborough had contented himself with a silent opposition to the measures of the new ministry; but he could not tamely acquiesce in this degradation of the national honour, and, therefore, heartily concurred in the determination of the Whigs to arraign so flagrant a breach of faith. The public indignation was not suffered to cool; for, on the 28th of May, the question was submitted to the cognizance of parliament.

Lord Halifax opened the debate: after representing the necessity and occasion of the war, he enumerated the glorious successes which had signalised the arms of the allies, and which had brought the common enemy of Christendom to such extremities. "But," he added, "this pleasant prospect is totally defaced, by the orders given to the queen's general, not to act offensively against the enemy. I pity that heroic and gallant general, who, on other occasions, took delight to charge the most formidable corps, and strongest squadrons, and cannot but be uneasy at his being fettered with shackles, and thereby prevented from reaping the glory he might well expect from leading on troops so accustomed to conquer. I pity the allies, who have relied upon the aid and friendship of the British nation, perceiving that what they have done, at so great an expense of blood and treasure, is of no effect, as they will be exposed to the revenge of that power against whom they have been so active. I pity the queen, her royal successors, and the present and future generations of Britain, when they shall find the nation deeply involved in debt, and that the common enemy, who occasioned it, though once near being sufficiently humbled, does still triumph and design their ruin, and are informed that this proceeds from the conduct of the British cabinet, in neglecting to make a right use of those advantages and happy occasions, which their own courage, with God's blessing, had gained, and put into their hands. I do not pretend to blame the queen, but the counsels and representations of those evil counsellors, who being confided in by her, manifested so little concern for her majesty and her people's honour, prosperity, and security, that they persuaded her to approve such measures, and emit such orders, as were attended with these, and a great many other

disgraceful and pernicious consequences. And as I am fully apprised of her majesty's good intentions to rectify every thing that is amiss, and of her great regard for your lordships' opinions in this weighty affair, I presume to move that an humble address be presented to her majesty, setting forth the bad and dishonourable effects of the restrictive order to her general; and beseeching her to recall the same, and direct him to act offensively, in conjunction with the other allies, against the common enemy."

At the conclusion of this speech, Marlborough rose, and with peculiar energy, observed: "After what has been said by the noble lord, nothing remains for me or any other person, but to second the motion; yet I will venture to trouble your lordships with a few observations on this subject. Although the negotiations for peace may be far advanced, yet I can see no reason, which should induce the allies or ourselves to remain inactive, and not push on the war with the utmost vigour, as we have incurred the expense of recruiting the army for the service of another year. That army is now in the field, and it has often occurred, that a victory or a siege produced good effects and manifold advantages, when treaties were still farther advanced than is the present negotiation. And as I am of opinion, that we should make the most we can for ourselves, the only infallible way to force France to an entire submission, is to besiege and occupy Cambray or Arras*, and to carry the war into the heart of that kingdom. But as the troops of the enemy are now encamped, it is impossible to execute this design, unless they are withdrawn from their position; and as they cannot be reduced to retire, for want of provision, they must be attacked and forced. For the truth of what I say, I appeal to a noble duke (looking at the duke of Argyle), whom I rejoice to see in the house, because he knows the country, and is as good a judge of these matters as any person now alive. These observations I have deemed fit to represent to

* In Lockhart, it is Cambray or Valenciennes; but this is probably a mistake, because in the other accounts of the debates, the places alluded to by the duke of Argyle in his reply, are Cambray and Arras; and this alteration is justified by the operations in the campaign of 1710. — See chapter 93.

your lordships, and hope they will induce your lordships to agree to the motion, which I second very heartily."

This appeal drew forth a reply from the duke of Argyle, whose enmity to his former patron was unbounded. "Not being apprised of this motion," he said, "I confess that I am unprepared for the question, and, therefore, should not have troubled your lordships, had not the noble duke, who spoke last, appealed to me for my opinion. I will declare it with my usual openness and candour. I do indeed perfectly know the country, and the situation of the enemy in their present camp; and I agree with the noble duke, that it is impossible to remove them, except by attacking and driving them away, and until that is effected, neither of the two sieges alluded to can be undertaken. I likewise agree, that the capture of these towns is the most effectual way to carry on the war with advantage, and would be a fatal blow to France." He then captiously and unjustly censured the military conduct of the great commander in the campaign of 1710.

"I wonder, indeed," he added, "that the noble duke should now have formed *this opinion*, after maintaining *another opinion*, when he had it in his power to carry into effect the same operation in a former campaign. For I then pressed his grace, as the most effectual and speedy method of procuring a safe and honourable peace, to besiege Arras and Cambray, and march into France. But he had then other sentiments; and, instead of besieging these fortresses, made a retrograde movement, losing much time, and exhausting much blood and treasure, in reducing Bethune, Aire, and St. Venant, towns of comparatively little importance. But as for his advice to attack the enemy, I must be so bold as to tell the noble duke that he knows the camp and hostile army to be much stronger than when he last attacked them at Malplaquet; and he need not be reminded with how much difficulty he then gained that camp, and how much blood was sacrificed, even so much that another or two such victories would undo us. Should the allies now fail in the attempt, and be defeated, the consequences would redound to the advantage of France." He concluded by expatiating on the perils of war, and argued against any hazardous operation, as the very conquests which might be effected, might be rendered nugatory by the terms of the peace which was now nearly concluded.

The speech of the duke of Argyle, which was delivered with his usual warmth and energy, made a deep impression, and produced the greater effect, because he was known to have been offended by the ministry, and had bitterly censured their narrow and impolitic views. By those who knew his temper, or were unacquainted with his rooted antipathy to Marlborough, it was concluded that nothing but absolute conviction could have extorted so cruel an invective against his former commander, and that so vehement a defence of the ministry, could only be prompted by a consciousness, that the terms of the intended peace were neither dishonourable nor injurious. This impression gave weight to the arguments of the ministerial party. In the course of the debate, some of the Whig lords having pressed the minister to inform the house, whether any orders of restraint had been sent to the British commander, he replied, that they who had the honour to serve the queen could not reveal the orders given to the general, without particular directions, and, in his opinion, they were not proper to be divulged. But he would venture to say, that if the duke of Ormond had refused to act offensively, he doubtless followed his instructions; and it was prudent not to hazard a battle, upon the point of concluding a good peace, considering that the enemy was apt to break his word.

Wharton adroitly profited by this avowal, observing, that he rejoiced in finding that noble lord so candid in acknowledging the sincerity of France; but that was, in his opinion, a strong reason for not only not keeping measures with such an enemy, but even for pushing him with the utmost vigour, till he was reduced to the necessity of acting honestly. To this sarcasm the treasurer replied, "Although the duke of Ormond might have refused to hazard a general action, he could positively declare that he would not decline joining with the allies in a siege, and that orders had been sent to him for that purpose."

This remark again roused the Duke of Marlborough, who observed that he could not reconcile the orders, said to be given to the general, with the rules of war; for it was impossible, he said, to carry on a siege without hazarding a battle, or making a shameful retreat, if the enemy attempted a relief.

The duke of Devonshire then declared, that by the proximity of blood, he was more concerned for the duke of Ormond's reputation than any other; and, therefore, he could not forbear observing, that he was surprised to hear any one dare make use of a nobleman of the first rank, and of so distinguished a character, as an instrument of so disgraceful a proceeding.

This observation drew from the ministerial advocates the customary reflections on the conduct of Marlborough, who appears to have been the object to which they directed their shafts on all occasions. Earl Poulett replied, "No one can doubt the duke of Ormond's bravery; but he does not resemble a certain general, who led troops to the slaughter, to cause a great number of officers to be knocked on the head, in a battle, or against stone walls, in order to fill his pocket, by disposing of their commissions." This imputation, perhaps the most vulgar and opprobrious which had ever been uttered in the House of Peers, was heard by Marlborough with the aspect of silent contempt, and the debate proceeded with renewed warmth. The Whigs strenuously exerted themselves to remove the impression occasioned by the speech of Argyle, and assailed the ministers with complaints of the mystery observed in the negotiation, surmising that such caution could be used, only to conceal dishonourable proceedings. A strong appeal being particularly made to Lord Strafford, to afford some information on the transactions in which he had been engaged, as one of the plenipotentiaries, the treasurer found it necessary to pledge himself, that in a few days he would lay before parliament the terms which had been concluded, and which, he doubted not, would give entire satisfaction to every member of that house, as well as to all true Englishmen. In reply to the farther insinuation, that the British government had so far forgot its honour as to engage in a separate peace, he rejoined, without hesitation, "Nothing of that nature has ever been intended; for such a peace would be so foolish, villanous, and knavish, that every servant of the queen must answer for it with his head to the nation. The allies," he added, "are acquainted with our proceedings, and satisfied with the terms."

So solemn a pledge from the principal servant of the crown admitted no farther debate; and Halifax, perceiving

the effect it had produced, made an effort to withdraw his motion. The ministry, however, were determined to complete their triumph; and, on a division, the question was lost by 68 voices against 40. This decision was combated in a severe protest signed by twenty-seven peers, among whom we distinguish the name of Marlborough. The protest was afterwards expunged by order of the house; but no precaution could prevent its diffusion by means of the press, and all attempts to discover the printer and publisher were ineffectual.*

The cruel reflection of Earl Poulett made a deeper impression on the feelings of the Duke of Marlborough than all the indignities to which he had before been exposed; although it would have been more becoming his magnanimous spirit to have buried it in oblivion, and left it to the contempt it deserved. But on the rising of the house, he sent a message by Lord Mohun to the earl, with an invitation to take the air in the country. The earl demanding whether this was meant as a challenge, received for answer, that the message required no explanation. Lord Mohun added: "I shall accompany the Duke of Marlborough, and your lordship would do well to provide a second."

This unexpected summons awakened an emotion in Lord Poulett, which he could not conceal from his lady on his return. A hint being instantly conveyed to Lord Dartmouth, he placed Lord Poulett under arrest, and was soon afterwards charged with an order by the queen, enjoining the Duke of Marlborough to proceed no farther in the affair.

* This debate is given in a very confused and unsatisfactory manner in the parliamentary records of the times. A more detailed and animated account is preserved by Lockhart, who was probably present on the occasion. He has, however, recorded only the speeches of Halifax, Marlborough, and Argyle. The two first we have exactly copied, but have omitted several passages in the speech of Argyle; because Lockhart has evidently attributed to him many expressions which fell from other members of the opposition. In particular he has imputed to him the cruel aspersion pronounced by Earl Poulett against the Duke of Marlborough. (See Lockhart's Papers, vol. i. p. 392.)

The other parts of the debate we have drawn from a collation of the respective accounts in the history of Europe for 1712; Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne; and Political State; Cunningham; Chandler's Debates; Continuation of Rapin; and Lediard.

The duke complied, and by the intervention of the lord treasurer, an apparent reconciliation took place; but the transaction exposed Marlborough to much invective from the writers of the day, and he was bitterly censured by the *Examiner*, for setting the example of party duels.

We close the account of these impolitic restrictions on Ormond with an indignant letter from Prince Eugene to the Duke of Marlborough, which displays their injurious effect, in checking the triumphant career of the confederate army.

"*Hayn, June* 9. — I am gratified with this safe opportunity of writing to your highness. You are doubtless informed of what has passed here and at Utrecht. There is surely no example of such proceedings, at the time when contrary assurances were solemnly given. Your highness is sufficiently acquainted with me, to be convinced that I am not accustomed to boast, and I do not easily form flattering hopes; but I do not hesitate in declaring to you, that it was entirely in our power to force the enemy to risk a battle to their disadvantage, or repass the Somme; and even had this operation been objected to, we might, at all events, have besieged Quesnoy and Landrecies, at the same time. But the orders given to the duke of Ormond having prevented it, the siege of Quesnoy is now carrying on with the troops of my army, and with those in the pay of the States. I refer you, as to the rest, to General Cadogan, who will inform you of all the particulars, as I have communicated them to him. I cannot sufficiently commend his conduct and activity."

CHAP. CIX.—PROGRESS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. — 1712.

AFTER the confident assertions of the treasurer in the House of Lords, and similar assurances given by the secretary in the House of Commons, the public impatiently waited the communication of the treaty, which had created the most sanguine expectations. Great, therefore, were the surprise, indignation, and disappointment which pervaded every patriotic bosom when the outlines of the intended peace were officially disclosed.

On the 6th of June the queen, in a longer and more laboured speech than usual, imparted the substance of certain preliminaries which were to form the basis of a general

peace. After touching on the difficulties which had occurred in maturing this arrangement, her majesty dwelt on the measures adopted for securing the Protestant succession in the house of Hanover, as *the object nearest her heart;* and stated that additional security had been given to this provision by the removal of that person out of the dominions of France, who had pretended to disturb this settlement.*

She then adverted to that article, which she incorrectly characterised as containing the grand principle of the alliance; viz., the separation of the crowns of France and Spain, for accomplishing which she affected the utmost solicitude.

The duke of Anjou was to renounce for ever, for himself and his issue, all title to the French monarchy; and the crown was to descend, after the death of the dauphin and the extinction of his heirs, by lineal order of affinity in the male line, to the duke of Berri, the house of Orleans, and successively to all the remaining branches of the Bourbon family. To prevent, as much as possible, the future union of the two kingdoms, Spain, on the extinction of Philip's line, was never to revert to any member of the house of Bourbon, but was to be entailed on such prince as should be designated in the treaty of peace.† These arrangements were to be ratified in the most solemn manner, not only by France and Spain, but also by the guarantee of the powers engaged in the war.

* The reader will perceive the difference between the denomination adopted in this place, and that employed by the queen in her speech during the Whig administration, in which *the person* here designated is called, without reserve, a *popish pretender*, &c.

† The words of the treaty, which subsequent events have rendered of importance, on this point, were these: — Philippe V., King of Spain, renounced "à toutes pretentions, droits, et titres que lui et sa postérité avaient ou pourraient avoir à l'avenir à la couronne de France. Il consentit pour lui et sa postérité que ce droit fût tenu et considéré comme passé au duc de Berry son frère et à ses descendans et postérité *male;* et en defaut de ce prince, et de sa postérité *male*, au duc de Bourbon son cousin et *à ses héritiers*, et aussi successivement à tous les princes du sang de France." The duke of Saxony and his *male* heirs were called to the succession, failing Philippe V. and his male heirs. This act of renunciation and entail of the crown of Spain on *male* heirs, was ratified by the Cortes of Castile and Arragon; by the parliament of Paris, by Great Britain and France in the sixth article of the Treaty of Utrecht. — (Schoell, *Hist. de Trait.*, ii. 99. 105.) — Ed.

The queen spoke of this arrangement in a high strain of exultation. "The nature of this proposal is such, that it executes itself. The interest of Spain is to support it; and, in France, the persons to whom that succession is to belong, will be ready and powerful enough to vindicate their own right. France and Spain are now more effectually divided than ever. And thus, by the blessing of God, will a real balance of power be fixed in Europe, and remain liable to as few accidents as human affairs can be exempted from."

Gibraltar and Minorca were to remain in the possession of England, together with commercial advantages in the trade to Spain and the Indies, including the assiento contract for thirty years. France also consented to the demolition of Dunkirk.

Her majesty then specified the arrangements made in favour of the allies, subject to the ultimate determination of the congress. The Rhine was to be the barrier of the empire; the Protestant interest in Germany was to be established on the footing of the treaty of Westphalia. The Spanish Netherlands, Naples, Milan, and Sardinia, with the places on the coast of Tuscany, were to be transferred to the emperor, as chief of the house of Austria; for which purpose the duke of Anjou had removed all difficulties by relinquishing his claim to the island. The possession of Sicily was reserved for future discussion.

The States were to be gratified in their own demands relative to commerce, with the exclusion of some few articles of merchandise, and with the entire barrier which they required in 1709 from France, with the exception of two or three places at most. The queen expressed her hope, that by the adoption of some expedients then in discussion, this barrier might be so settled as to secure the republic from any aggression of France, which was the foundation of all her engagements on that head with the States.

The demands of Portugal were stated to be yet unsettled; those of Russia to admit of little difficulty; and those of Savoy to be nearly met by the offers of France, though she was exerting her influence to procure farther advantages for so useful an ally.

France, she added, had consented to acknowledge the actual rank of the elector palatine, and the electoral dignity in the

house of Hanover, inserted in her demands, at that prince's desire.

She concluded with expressing her conviction that she should be able to secure the several interests of the other allies.

To the reader who conceives the impression made on the public mind by a long series of unexampled successes, it would be needless to describe the feelings with which this speech was heard. Not merely the opposers of the government, but even some who, from principle, had supported the ministry, and relied on their solemn declaration to the legislature, shrunk with shame and horror from the contemplation of a peace which involved the sacrifice of public honour, and the dereliction of public principle. Three obvious misstatements could not escape the most common observation. 1. That the main principle of the grand alliance was not the separation of the two kingdoms, but the exclusion of a Bourbon prince from the crown of Spain. 2. That no renunciation by Philip could invalidate his or his son's pretensions to the French crown; and, therefore, that no precautions could prevent the probability of a civil convulsion in France, or the renewal of war in Europe, should the infant dauphin die. 3. That these articles had been clandestinely arranged between England and France, without either the consent or participation of the allies.

These obvious defects, however, were overlooked in the House of Commons, where the Tory and Jacobite influence was too powerful to be stemmed. An address was accordingly carried by acclamation, sanctioning the terms of peace already communicated in the speech, and expressing the fullest confidence in the wisdom and justice of the queen to mature the future arrangements.

But notwithstanding the exertion of the prerogative, which had recently been made, to obtain a majority in the upper house, the peers in opposition made a vigorous stand. The arrangement relative to the Protestant succession was the only article which was received with approbation: the other conditions underwent a scrutiny of the severest kind, and the dishonourable transaction itself was stigmatised in the terms it deserved. It was by none more arraigned than by the Duke of Marlborough himself, whose plans it had

foiled, whose hopes it had frustrated, and whose victories it had rendered vain. In a strain of manly invective he observed, with a foreboding which the event has justified: "The measures pursued in England for the last year are directly contrary to her majesty's engagements with the allies, sully the triumphs and glories of her reign, and will render the English name odious to all other nations."

Lord Strafford attempted to retort, not by argument, but by invective. He accused the Duke of Marlborough of rendering the allies, particularly the Dutch, backward in consenting to the peace, by maintaining with them a secret correspondence, and encouraging them to prolong the war, in the hope of deriving support from a strong party in this country. This captious accusation met with due reproof from Lord Cowper, who observed, the noble lord had spent so much time abroad, that he had almost forgotten, not only the language, but the constitution of his country. "It was a new crime," he added, "to be charged with holding a correspondence with allies, whose interest the queen had declared to be inseparable from her own; whereas, it was difficult to reconcile, either with our own laws or with the laws of honour and justice, the conduct of those who had treated clandestinely with the common enemy, without the participation of our allies."

After exceptions made to some parts of the proposed address of thanks, Nottingham and Cowper, with great energy, supported the introduction of a clause, requesting her majesty to take such measures with her allies, as might induce them to join in a mutual guarantee of the Protestant succession; but this clause, being ably opposed by Oxford and Poulett, was rejected by a large majority. The original address was then carried by 81 voices against 36.

The Whigs and their Tory allies were not, however, discouraged; but repeated and embodied all their objections to the preliminaries in a protest of peculiar energy and argument, which was signed by twenty-four peers, among whom we again find the names of Marlborough and Godolphin. The freedom, boldness, and truth of this protest, irritated the ministerial party; and, as in the former instance, they voted its erasure from the journals. Notwithstanding all the threats of parliamentary punishment, and the precautions of the

government, this important document could not be suppressed, but was circulated in print throughout the country. Rewards were in vain offered, and penalties denounced against the printers and publishers; but no discovery was ever made.

This was the last effort of the Whigs to awaken the nation to a sense of its honour and interest. The parliament was soon after prorogued; and here terminated the political career of Marlborough during the remaining years of the reign of Queen Anne.

The sanction of Parliament to the offers of Louis, confirmed the resolution of the queen to execute the clandestine agreement with France, for a cessation of hostilities, and to accomplish her promise of ordering the British troops, as well as the auxiliaries in her pay, to withdraw from the confederate army, on the delivery of Dunkirk, should the other allies refuse to imitate her example.

With this view, the British plenipotentiary at Utrecht proposed to those of the emperor, the States, and the other members of the confederacy, to accept the conditions offered by France, and to concur with England in consenting to an armistice. But the proposal was either peremptorily rejected or evaded, until reference was made to their respective principals. Deputies were sent from the Hague, with orders that the Dutch troops should not agree to the armistice, until they received explicit instructions. This disappointment, however, did not alter the resolution of the English cabinet; and special directions were transmitted to the duke of Ormond, to cease from assisting in the operations of the campaign. As soon as he received the requisite information from Torcy, that the king of France had signed the articles of agreement, he was instructed to take a proper occasion of acquainting Eugene and the deputies with his orders to publish a suspension of arms for two months, in virtue of the conditions settled with France, and the consent to deliver Dunkirk as a pledge of her sincerity.

While he was hesitating to communicate these dishonourable instructions, he was involved in a new dilemma, by a message from Villars* requesting to be informed, whether the troops of England were employed in the siege

* Mem. de Villars, vol. ii. p. 207.

of Quesnoy? Having replied in the negative, Villars imperiously required a farther explanation, whether the troops under his orders would oppose any attempt of the French to relieve the place, supposing Eugene should continue the siege? his sovereign having been assured that the British troops, and the auxiliaries in British pay, were not to act directly or indirectly against his army. In consequence of this categorical demand, Ormond did not hesitate to conform to the instructions which he had received from the secretary.

He apprised Prince Eugene of his orders, and then addressing himself to the generals of the auxiliaries in British pay, acquainted them that a suspension of arms had been concluded for two months, between England and France, and required them to conform to this arrangement. He added, that the queen would consider herself as acquitted from all obligation to liquidate the arrears of subsidies, due to any prince whose troops should refuse to obey his orders. A similar communication was made to the Dutch deputies, with an intimation that the British troops and their auxiliaries would separate from the confederate army, if they withheld their assent.

After many remonstrances on the part of the other generals, Ormond was persuaded to defer the promulgation of the armistice for three days. On the expiration of that term, he prepared to march towards Dunkirk; but he had the mortification to find, that neither promises nor threats could induce the generals and auxiliaries under their command to follow so shameful an example. The hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, who spake the language of all, bade the duke's adjutant to tell his general, that "the Hessians would gladly march if it were to fight the French;" and another commander said, "We do not serve for pay, but for fame."

On the 16th of July, Ormond, with the British troops, amounting to 12,000 men, separated from the confederate army, by quitting his camp of Cambresis. He was accompanied only by four squadrons and one battalion of the Holstein subsidiaries, and a regiment of dragoons from the contingent of Liege. The march of the troops presented a spectacle no less melancholy than imposing. As they had

so often fought under the same banners, and so often emulated each other in the career of victory, this inglorious separation conveyed a pang to the bosom of the meanest soldier. To borrow the unadorned language of Serjeant Milner, "As they marched off that day, both sides looked very dejectedly on each other, neither being permitted to speak to the other, to prevent reflections that might thereby arise, on the strange revolution between us and our allies, either by our cessation of arms, or entrance on an odd peace with France."*

Nor were these precautions unnecessary, for the threat of withholding the arrears of the auxiliaries had roused them to such a pitch of fury, that fears were entertained, lest they should seize the person of the British general, and prevent the retreat of his troops, as a pledge for the liquidation.

In the midst of this mortification, Ormond relied on the grateful fidelity of his own countrymen, for delivering them from the hardships of war; but great was his disappointment, when, at the close of his first march, the suspension of arms was proclaimed at the head of each regiment. A burst of indignation and abhorrence accompanied this proof of national dishonour. Instead of huzzas and acclamations, he heard nothing but a "general hiss and murmur throughout the camp." To adopt the words of a contemporary historian, "The British soldiers were so enraged at this unworthy conduct, that they were observed tearing their hair, and rending their clothes, with furious exclamations and execrable curses against the duke of Ormond, as a stupid tool, and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers, were so overwhelmed with vexation, that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground through very shame, with downcast eyes; and for several days shrunk from the sight even of their fellow soldiers. For it grieved them to the heart, to submit to the disgrace of laying down their arms after so many splendid victories. Some left their colours to serve among the allies, and others afterwards withdrew; and whenever they recollected the Duke of Marlborough, and the late glorious times, their eyes flowed with tears."†

* Milner, p. 356.

† Cunningham, vol. ii. p. 432.

Accompanied thus by marks of public detestation, Ormond continued his march; but the treachery which the British cabinet had practised towards the allies, nearly recoiled on themselves. At Bouchain, Tournay, and Douay, the Dutch governors refused to open their gates, for the passage of the retrograding army; and, at the same moment, the king of France, profiting by the inability of the British commander to prevail over the auxiliary troops, declared that after such a breach of promise, he could not relinquish the possession of Dunkirk. Without shelter or support, dreading the resentment of the confederates, distrustful of the enemy, and unable even to rely on his own troops, Ormond had no other resource to secure his retreat, than by seizing Ghent and Bruges, and soliciting the direction of his own government.

In the first moment of success, the British ministry had exulted in the disappointment of the confederates; they boasted that their royal mistress, instead of receiving, was giving the law, and carried the fate of Europe in her hands, obliging France to enter into engagements, and give pledges to her, who was herself under none to France.* But this unexpected dilemma soon reduced them to a more humble tone. They reproached the French monarch with a violation of faith, appealed to his gratitude, and endeavoured to work on his apprehensions, by expatiating on the consequences which might ensue, from a revulsion of the public sentiment. Fortunately, a sense of his own weakness, and a prospect of the evils attendant on an unsettled succession, prevailed more powerfully with Louis, than the expostulations of those whom he had learnt to despise. He affected to yield to their remonstrances, and delivered up Dunkirk to a body of troops detached from the coast of England. By this cession, the position of Ormond was secured, and he remained in his post, waiting the issue of the pending negotiation.

The cession of Dunkirk, however, did not completely restore harmony between the cabinets of England and France. Warm disputes arising in the complicated negotiations, Louis was encouraged by the increasing divisions between England and the other allies, to resume his haughty tone; and it was to be apprehended that the renewal of the

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 378.

armistice would encounter much difficulty. In vain the British plenipotentiaries continued to press the Dutch and the other allies to accede to the cessation of hostilities, and admit a minister from Philip to the congress. As they persevered in the prosecution of the war, the British cabinet had no alternative but to sue France to moderate her pretensions. With this view, Secretary St. John, who had been recently created Viscount Bolingbroke, was sent *incognito* to the court of Versailles, and was accompanied in his mission by Gualtier and Prior, the original agents of the clandestine intercourse. The secretary accomplished the objects of his mission with great address; and, as Louis dreaded even the remotest chance of a new revolution of parties in England, he consented to compromise the disputed points. He agreed that Sicily should be ceded to the duke of Savoy, and Bolingbroke acquiesced in the restoration of the elector of Bavaria. The time and mode for the renunciation of the crowns of France and Spain were also settled; several minor points mutually adjusted; and the suspension of arms between the two kingdoms prolonged for four months.

After a stay of only a few days, Bolingbroke returned, exulting that his mission had removed the mutual embarrassments of the two governments. Prior remained at Paris, as *chargé d'affaires*, and being soon after joined by the duke of Shrewsbury, in the quality of ambassador, the most sanguine hopes were entertained, that through their intervention, the negotiation would be brought to a successful issue.

The formal secession of England from the grand alliance, damped the spirit, and dissolved the union of the confederates. The surrender of Quesnoy, which took place on the very day of Ormond's retreat, was the last triumph of this hitherto glorious contest; for although Eugene was still at the head of the army not inferior to the enemy, the example of defection spread distrust and alarm. With mingled sentiments of desperation and chagrin, he hastened to invest Landrecies, and seems to have forgotten his usual caution, by not calculating on the reinforcements which his antagonist was enabled to draw from the garrisons now relieved from danger, by the declaration of the armistice.

With this accession of strength, Villars conducted his movements with consummate skill, and overwhelmed the allied forces. He surprised a corps of 8000 men, under the earl of Albemarle, encamped at Denain, for the purpose of facilitating the passage of convoys to the besieging army before Landrecies. Having forced their intrenchments, he killed, captured, or dispersed seventeen battalions; and among the prisoners were, besides the earl of Albemarle, four lieutenant-generals, five colonels, and no less than 300 other officers. He seized also a great quantity of ammunition and provisions, and made a considerable booty. What rendered this defeat more unfortunate and disgraceful was, that it was witnessed by Eugene himself, who advancing rapidly on the other side of the Scheldt, to the relief of Albemarle, was prevented from passing, by the destruction of the bridge communicating with Denain.

In consequence of this disaster, the siege was raised, and the French marshal continued, with little interruption, his career of success. Having recovered the small posts of Mortaigne, St. Amand, and Marchiennes, he invested Douay; and, after a fruitless attempt of Eugene to relieve it, reduced him to the mortification of witnessing its surrender. Quesnoy shared the same fate; and this disastrous campaign, which was expected to have been distinguished by the invasion of France, and the signature of peace under the walls of Paris, was fatally closed on the 10th of October, by the loss of Bouchain; the last great conquest which had swelled the triumphs of the hero of Blenheim. The only compensation for these losses in the Netherlands, was the petty capture of fort Knoque.*

It is needless to detail the military operations in the other parts of the theatre of war; because the defection of England rendered all the exertions of the confederates equally languid and useless.

On the Rhine and in Italy, the allied forces awaited in suspense the result of the campaign in Flanders, and the progress of the pending negotiations. In Germany, the operations of the imperial general, the duke of Wirtemberg,

* Accounts in the Gazettes;—Vie du Prince Eugene;—Memoires de Villars;—Narratives of the campaign in the History of Europe;—Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne;—Brodrick; &c. &c.

terminated in a fruitless attempt to force the lines of Weissemburg; his antagonist, Marshal d'Harcourt, satisfied with the repulse, made no offensive movement, and, in the month of November, the two armies retired into winter quarters.

On the side of Italy, notwithstanding the early efforts of the Germans to give effect to the operations of the campaign, by the capture of Porto-Ercole, their success was followed by no important consequences. The duke of Savoy was lured by the secret offer of England, to secure to him the possession of Sicily; and, though he declined acceding to the armistice when it was first proposed, he observed a cautious line of conduct, and remained on the defensive. Marshal Berwick, on the other hand, was too prudent to disturb the pacific disposition of a prince, who was evidently wavering between his interest and love of glory. At the close of the campaign, Victor Amadeus recalled his troops into Piedmont; and, relying on the kind intentions of the queen in his favour, accepted the armistice, and thus terminated* his co-operation with the court of Vienna.

In the peninsula the same causes produced the same effects. At the ratification of the general armistice, the remnant of the English troops embarked at Barcelona, amidst the murmurs and execrations of the Catalans; and Count Staremberg, deprived of his brave auxiliaries, passed the campaign in the unsuccessful siege of Gerona, which was protracted to the unusual term of nine months. Philip, conscious that he should reap more advantage from the negotiations than from active hostilities, waited in confident security the termination of that treaty, which was to preserve to him Spain and the Indies, without farther effusion of blood.† On the side of Portugal, the campaign was equally abortive, as the king was preparing to accede to the suspension of arms.

Marlborough viewed with an anxious eye the disastrous events of the war, and the no less fatal tendency of the public negotiations at Utrecht, as well as of the clandestine intercourse with that enemy, whom it had been the great object of his military career to reduce. The gloom of these forebodings was increased by a melancholy event, the death of Lord Godolphin, which deeply affected his feelings, and

* Muratori, Annali d'Italia, anno 1712;—Targe, tom. vi. chap. 5.

† St. Philippe;—Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 21.

revived in his memory the splendid achievements of that glorious administration, in which he and his colleague had taken so prominent a share, associates in glory, and now companions in disgrace.

This great and upright statesman, after long and excruciating illness, terminated his days in the house of the duke at St. Alban's, giving a memorable example of disinterestedness and integrity in office, which shone clearer after the ordeal of persecution and vengeance he had undergone.

By an indorsement on the queen's letter of dismission, the duchess observes, that what he left behind him scarcely sufficed for the expenses of his funeral; and records, as a singular circumstance, that several government and other securities were found by his executors to the amount of about 14,000*l.*, which belonged to her and some other friends and dependants, whose money he kindly put out to interest.* The title and scanty fortune of the veteran statesman devolved on his son Francis, who had given a new lustre to his house by his marriage with Henrietta, eldest daughter of the Duke of Marlborough.

This melancholy event tended to confirm Marlborough in the resolution he had formed, of retiring from his ungrateful country, which he had only suspended from his unwillingness to quit a friend, who was labouring under the severest sufferings of bodily illness. Many circumstances, indeed, concurred in inducing him to tear himself from his family and connections, at the advanced age of sixty-two, when he began to feel the increasing infirmities incident to the decline of life. His strenuous opposition to the measures of

* "Had not his elder brother happened to die, he had been in very low circumstances after having been in several reigns more than twenty years, though he was a man that never made any great expences, for he won at play, and mortally hated all kinds of show and grandeur, but he was very charitable and generous; and though he had lived so long, and had great employments, when he died, he had not in the world but about fourteen thousand pounds in tallies, of which sum seven was mine, three Mrs. Rundue's, a thousand Mrs. Curtis's, a woman that looked after my two elder children, and many other small sums that he took of helpless people, who thought themselves safe in his hands; and when all his debts were paid there could hardly be enough to bury him."

Indorsement of the duchess to the letter written by the queen when she dismissed Lord Godolphin.

government, and particularly to the terms of the projected treaty, could not fail to increase the animosity of the queen, and draw on him the vengeance of an offended party. He was aware that he would not be suffered to enjoy that tranquillity which his age and infirmities rendered necessary. He was convinced that a House of Commons, a ministry, and a sovereign, who had already construed his former services into crimes, would pursue him with additional acrimony, and be contented with nothing less than his ruin. He, therefore, could no longer hesitate on securing that asylum abroad, which was denied to him in his native land.

Many idle conjectures have been advanced, and many ridiculous stories propagated, relative to the causes and circumstances of his voluntary exile. Instead, however, of entering into a frivolous and unsatisfactory inquiry on the subject, we shall briefly relate those facts which we have traced from indisputable documents.

If, during the session of parliament, when the ministry were scarcely established in their employments, neither a sense of national gratitude, nor a consciousness of their own dignity, could screen Marlborough from malicious invectives and personal insults, even in the House of Peers, we may judge of the torrent of obloquy to which he was exposed at the close of the session, when a triumphant majority had borne the government through every difficulty, and silenced all opposition. Every agent of political intrigue was then employed ; every malignant passion roused ; every mercenary underling of the press encouraged, by the largesses and example of Oxford and Bolingbroke, to throw odium on the general and statesman who had saved the country. Every previous act of his life was brought in review, and perverted to his dishonour ; the irregularities of his early youth in the corrupt court of Charles II., were blazoned in the most hateful colours ; the scurrilous pen which produced the New Atalantis, was stimulated and rewarded ; even his domestic retirement was violated ; and the harmless enjoyments of social life, as well as the attentions of friendship and intimacy, were construed into political intrigues, or stigmatised as crimes. The annals and periodical papers of the times abound with narratives and satirical allusions, which it would now be indecorous even

to repeat, and which cannot be perused without horror and disgust.

While these misrepresentations were producing their effect, the ministry were not idle in pushing those prosecutions, which had been instituted against him in his public capacity. The first of these was the suit for the recovery of 15,000*l.* a year derived from the contribution of 2½ per cent., which was brought forward in the court of Queen's Bench. The manner in which this process was conducted, evidently proved that his plea of justification would be disallowed, and that he could not expect that equity to which the meanest of his fellow-subjects was entitled.

The other suit was still more galling to his feelings, still more unjust in itself, and still more dishonourable to the nation. We have already perceived from the letters which passed between Marlborough and Oxford, that four commissioners had been appointed to examine the accounts relative to the building of Blenheim; but notwithstanding the promises of the treasurer to obtain warrants from the queen, and to expedite the completion of the structure, considerable arrears were due to the workmen, and large sums were claimed by those who had advanced loans for the same purpose, amounting in the whole to 30,000*l.*

Although both the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough refused to pay the workmen, or guarantee the loans, and justly considered it as the concern of government, in conformity with the promise of the queen, formally recorded in the acts of parliament, yet no money was issued, excepting a small advance in 1711, barely adequate to the expense of covering in the works. The building was accordingly suspended, and the workmen and other creditors were encouraged to sue the duke for the liquidation of their claims. This suit was another instance of unrelenting persecution, as well as a forfeiture of national honour; but there was little doubt that, if brought into the Exchequer, it would be decided against him.

Having, therefore, the design of withdrawing from England, he applied to the treasurer, through the medium of Mr. Maynwaring.* Oxford received this application with a

* This was the last act of devotion and friendship which Maynwaring was enabled to manifest towards his noble patron; for, soon afterwards,

degree of attention, which marks his gratitude for past favours, and a due sense of the consideration to which the Duke of Marlborough was entitled. On this occasion, we find two of his letters, which plainly prove that he obtained the passport, notwithstanding considerable opposition from some other members of the cabinet.

"*Oct.* 30. — Sir; I received the favour of yours, and will be ready to meet the gentleman any time he thinks good; but I believe it will be difficult to do it this week; any day the next he will please to appoint. I beg you will make my compliments. I am, with great truth, Sir, your most humble and obedient servant.

"OXFORD."

"*Oct.* 31. — Sir; I desire you will, with my most humble service, assure your friend that there have been endeavours from both sides to obstruct granting the pass desired, yet I shall have the honour to put it into his hands. I did not think it worth while to trouble you with the obstruction one meets with; for when I undertook it, I was not to be deterred from finishing it. I am, with great sincerity," &c.

We shall not attempt to detail any farther circumstances of this mysterious transaction, which we have no clue to unravel, but merely observe, that it received the entire approbation of the queen; for, in a conversation with the duchess of Hamilton, she said, "The Duke of Marlborough has acted wisely in going abroad." *

The terms of the passport have given rise to no less variety of conjectures than the mode in which it was obtained. Some have confidently asserted, that the residence of the

he fell a victim to dysentery, caused by walking late in the gardens of St. Alban's, where he was on a visit to the duchess.

Maynwaring, like the duke and duchess, had set out in life a zealous Jacobite. He was a man of literary and dramatic tastes. After mingling some years in the society of Paris, he returned to London, was made one of the commissioners of customs, and afterwards, by Godolphin, auditor of the imprests. A connection Maynwaring formed in middle life with the celebrated actress Mrs. Oldfield, much scandalized his friends. His death was a great loss to the duchess, whose faithful correspondent he had been, to whom he was honestly attached, without being blinded to the faults of her character. Possessing an intimate knowledge of the chief actors, he early foresaw that the "reign of Queen Sarah," as it was termed, would not be of long duration; and with the sincerity of true friendship, strove to warn her of this probable issue of a "passion," as he justly called it, with which the queen regarded her spoiled favourite. — ED.

* Lord Cowper's Diary.

duke was limited to a certain place or places; others, that he was furnished with a general letter of recommendation from the queen. To these idle suppositions the contents of the instrument itself will be the best answer.

The pass permits his grace the Duke of Marlborough to go into foreign parts, whithersoever he may think fit, together with his suite, and recommends him to the good offices of all kings, princes, republics, and her Majesty's allies, as well as to commanders, &c., her own subjects; allows to go freely and commodiously wherever his need requires; and states that such good offices shall be acknowledged and returned, when opportunity serves. It is dated Windsor Castle, 30th October, 1712, and countersigned Bolingbroke.*

His retinue, as enumerated in the pass, consisted of two gentlemen, three valets de chambre, one cook, three footmen, coachman, postilion, helper, two grooms.

With this permission, the duke was preparing for his departure, when a melancholy catastrophe occurred, which afforded his enemies a new subject for calumny. The duke of Hamilton, who had been appointed ambassador to France, and was in high favour with the queen and ministry, had been engaged in a private quarrel with Lord Mohun. The consequence was a duel, in which the latter was killed on the spot, and his antagonist soon afterwards expired. As this peer had taken so prominent a part in the recent quarrel with Lord Poulett, and as General Macartney, his second, was a devoted partisan of Marlborough, it was represented as political, and malignantly attributed to the instigation of the disgraced commander, who was accused by the *Examiner* of setting the example of party duels, and making Lord Mohun the bully of his faction.

Marlborough was now more anxious to hasten his departure from a country, where he was exposed to such cruel detraction.

* Bolingbroke having, as secretary of state, officially signed the pass, some writers have erroneously stated that it was obtained through his influence. The letter of Oxford sufficiently contradicts this assertion; and the secretary, as the author of the Life of Maynwaring observes, vol. iii., was one of the persons who opposed the grant of it.

Chap. CX. — Peace of Utrecht. — 1712, 1713.

Before his departure, the Duke of Marlborough vested his estates in the hands of his sons-in-law, as trustees. He also consigned 50,000*l.* to the care of his friend Cadogan, to be lodged in the Dutch funds, in order to supply them, as the duchess observes, with the means of subsistence, should the Stuart line be restored.

After taking an affectionate leave of his family and wife, who continued in England to settle his affairs, he repaired to Dover, where he arrived on the 24th of November. The wind being contrary, he remained at the neighbouring seat of his friend, Sir Henry Furnese, till the Sunday following, the 28th, when he embarked in the North Briton packet, as a private passenger, without receiving any other honour than the voluntary salute of the captain of the vessel. But this neglect of his country was amply compensated by the cordial reception which he experienced on reaching the Continent.

At his entrance into the harbour of Ostend, a salute of artillery from the town, forts, and shipping, welcomed his arrival. The garrison was under arms; and he was conducted by the governor and General Cadogan through a vast concourse of people, to the house of Captain Brown, where he was sumptuously entertained, at the same time gratified with an account of the capture of fort Knoque; a success which, however trifling, awakened his patriotic feelings. On the following morning he departed under a triple discharge of artillery; and, on approaching Antwerp, was met without the walls by the governor, the marquis of Terracina, whom he recognised with pleasure, as having delivered up the citadel, and joined the cause of the allies, after the splendid day of Ramilies. In the name of his imperial master, the marquis offered his noble guest all the honours usually paid to sovereigns, which the duke declined; but could not prevent the discharge of the artillery, or suppress the acclamations of the people, on beholding the great gene-

ral who had delivered them from the yoke of France. After accepting a collation, he proceeded towards Maestricht, hoping to pass unheeded, by deviating into the most private roads; but all his endeavours to seclude himself from observation were unavailing, for parties of horse paraded the country between Antwerp and Maestricht, to offer their attendance; and, on entering the town, at seven in the evening, he found the whole garrison drawn up under arms, from the gate to the house of the governor. Here he alighted, amidst repeated salutations from the bulwarks; a guard of honour distinguished his residence; and, on the ensuing morning, he was complimented by the magistrates, in a full body, and with as great tokens of respect as if he still retained the command of the confederate army. Nor were less honours paid to him on his departure from the territories of the States-general; for, on his journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, persons of all ranks and nations flocked to hail the preserver of the empire, bestowing their blessings on him as their great deliverer. They were struck with his noble demeanour, and testified their admiration, by declaring that his looks, his air, and his address, were no less conquering than his sword. Many mingled exclamations of pity with their cheering huzzas; many burst into tears, exclaiming that they deemed it a greater honour to be born in Lapland than in England; and that no nation ever fell so unaccountably from such a height of glory and esteem, into such contempt and degradation. "In a word," to use the animated expressions of his earliest biographer, "all ages and sexes both adored and bewailed him; whilst the duke himself showed that the greatness of his sufferings was only to be surmounted by the greatness of his courage, and went through the town of Aix-la-Chapelle, to the house that was prepared for his reception, in such a manner, as he bore at heart the pressure of other people's misfortunes, not the remembrance of his own. The next day his levee was crowded by all persons of rank and distinction in the town, who, though of different interests and nations, were unanimous in their respect for his great merits. In particular, the duke de Lesdiguières, speaking of him at his return, observed to the abbot de Guilestre, 'I can now say that I have seen the man, who is equal to the marshal de Turenne in conduct, to

the prince of Condé in courage, and superior to marshal de Luxembourg in success.'" *

Arriving at Aix-la-Chapelle, he seems to have been disappointed by a delay in the departure of the duchess from England; and expresses his regret in an affectionate letter, dated Jan. 18:—"I writ to you by the last post, to inform you that the port of Ostend is never shut by the frost, and that of the Brill very rarely; but, by the printed papers, I see you have no thoughts of leaving England till the middle of this month, old style; so that I am afraid this may still find you at London, which I am sorry for. For besides the impatience I am in of having you with me, this frosty weather makes the sea calm, and the roads as good as in summer; so that I could have wished we might have got to Frankfort before the thaw, of which I now despair. But you may be sure that when I have the happiness of your company, nothing shall be neglected to make your journey easy."

He continued some time *incognito* at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he was peculiarly careful in withdrawing, as much as possible, from public observation, and in giving no cause for that jealousy, with which his numerous enemies watched his conduct. In this situation he received the condolence and friendly counsel of Eugene, whose affection was superior to any change of circumstances, notwithstanding his imperial master cautiously abstained from any direct communication with the noble exile.

"*Vienna, Jan. 25.* — Sir; I received only four days ago the letter your highness did me the honour to write to me on the 17th of December, by the baron de Fessel. I wished much to take leave of you before my departure from Holland; but I was in a state of anxiety till I was apprised that you were on this side of the water, knowing the people with whom you have to deal. I did not fail to show your letter to his imperial majesty, when I gave him that which you addressed to him. He does not reply to it for want of a safe conveyance; but he has ordered me to assure you of his esteem and friendship, and to say, that he will lose no opportunity to give you proofs of them. He begs you to communicate the same thing to the person who has written to him, and the reasons why he does not answer. I think your highness will do well to remain as long as possible at Aix-la-Chapelle, without causing suspicion; for I know you are watched. Nothing can be more just than the thoughts of your highness, touching affairs in general, and those of England in particular.

* Life of Marlborough, p. 175.

You know his imperial majesty alone has held firm hitherto, making every possible effort, and having even persuaded the empire to do the same; but this cannot last; and if the Dutch and the other allies, through fear or bad government, will ruin themselves, and Europe with them, it cannot be prevented. They will be the first. What I can assure your highness is, that his imperial majesty will forget nothing that depends on him, to remedy the bad state of affairs, if opportunity offers, although the conduct of the allies gives him cause to fear embarking himself with them.

"He commands me to make this known to your highness, that you may have no cause of fear relative to your letter."

After lingering some time at Aix-la-Chapelle, in constant expectation of his wife's arrival, he quitted that city, from a suspicion of a conspiracy to seize his person, and returned to Maestricht, from whence he thus affectionately writes: —

To the Duchess.

"*Maestricht, Feb. 5.* — If you have observed by my letters that I thought you would have left England sooner than you have been able to do, I hope you will be so kind and just to me, to impute it to the great desire I had of having the satisfaction of your company. For I am extremely sensible of the obligation I have to you, for the resolution you have taken of leaving your freinds and country for my sake. I am very sure, if there be any thing in my power that may make it easy to you, I should do it with all imaginable pleasure. In this place you will have little conveniences; so that we must get to Frankfort as soon as we can. I wish we may be better there; but I fear you will not be easy till we get to some place, where we may settle for some time; so that we may be in a method, and orderly way of living; and if you are then contented, I shall have nothing to trouble me.

"When you go to Brussels, I desire you would give yourself the trouble of going to see the hangings at M. de Vost's; you may do it in half an hour, whilst they get the dinner ready. Cadogan has promised to send me an express, as soon as you land, by which you may give me the pleasure of two lines. I am ever yours. M."

He had soon the satisfaction of being joined by his partner in exile; and, after a short stay, conveyed her to Frankfort on the Maine, where he resided several months. In May he made an excursion to his principality of Mindelheim,, where he was received by the inhabitants with the honours due to him as sovereign, and as a prince of the holy empire.

On his return, he had the mortification to receive intelligence from England, that the commissioners appointed by the Commons to examine and state the debts due to the army, had reported some farther charges against him. They had accused him of "directing the deputy commissary to

muster the troops as complete, when defective, for which he received a pistole per troop, and ten shillings per company, as a gratuity or perquisite on every muster from the subject-troops; although he never mustered the foreigners, except some corps, without having any treaty or establishment for his guide."*

Without a moment's delay, he drew up a manly refutation of these malicious charges, and sent it to one of the Peers†, for the purpose of being submitted to the Upper House. At the same time he transmitted a duplicate to Mr. Craggs, to be laid before the Commons.

"*Frankfort, June* 2. — My Lord, — I was extremely surprised to find myself charged with mismanagement of the public money in the report of the commissioners of accounts, on pretence of the subject-troops having been mustered complete during the war, and the foreigners not being mustered at all. It is easy to misrepresent the best things, and give the greatest falsehoods an air of truth, by suppressing of circumstances; by relating facts by halves; by reporting only parts of answers; by confounding of times, and drawing conclusions from innuendos and suppositions, which I shall demonstrate to be the manner I am treated on this occasion. I am charged first with the want of authority for passing the troops complete; and it is insinuated, in the next place, that the doing it was a detriment and prejudice to the public. As to the want of authority, this objection is, in fact, false; for the late high treasurer, Lord Godolphin, and myself, were empowered by parliament to take off respites, to pass musters complete, and to act as we should find most for her majesty's service in those matters; as appears by a clause in an act of parliament, passed in the year 1702 or 1703, of which Mr. Cardonel can give an exact and particular account: and I appeal to the testimony of my Lord Bolingbroke, who was then secretary of war, for a confirmation of what I allege in this affair. As to the pretending it has increased the public expense, the contrary is so manifestly known, that had the commissioners examined any one officer of the army on that point, or taken the trouble to compute how little the non-effective money amounted to, and how much the recruits cost, it would have appeared as plain as a mathematical demonstration, that very great sums had been saved to the public by this way of recruiting. I am certain no officer will refuse to attest on oath, that this fund was seldom or ever sufficient to complete their companies; and I appeal to all those who sit in the house, whether my obliging the captains to recruit out of the non-effective money was not complained of as a hardship on them, since they were very often forced to apply part of their personal pay to complete their companies; for which reason frequent

* Boyer's Queen Anne, p. 630; — Journals.

† This letter is without address, but was probably written to the Lord Treasurer Oxford.

applications were made to me by all the general officers of the foot, to obtain some consideration for the captains, on account of this extraordinary expense. I, however, always withstood it, to prevent increasing the charge of the army in Flanders, which would have been the unavoidable consequence of giving any thing like recruit-money by parliament. That the public has gained very considerably by the method I put this matter in, is a truth, not only proved by facts, and witnessed by all the officers in the army, but of a nature that it carries self-evidence along with it; for upon reckoning the recruits to cost four or five pounds a man, and the vacancy from whence that sum is to arise at sixpence a day, and considering the regiments came complete into the field, and that several of the men died, and were killed at the latter end of the campaign, it will appear that the fund of non-effective money was not sufficient for the recruiting, and the captains, consequently, under a necessity of supplying what was wanting out of their personal pay; for a particular state of which I refer to any one colonel it may be thought fit to examine. As for any directions that might have been given Mr. Marshal, the deputy commissary, concerning the musters, I am certain they are exactly conformable to the power vested in me for that end by parliament, which may be verified by Mr. Cardonel's book of entries. Concerning their second charge, of the foreigners not being mustered, it is as groundless as if they had said those troops had never been in the field, or ever existed but in imagination. Since the Commissary Marshal, who mustered them, is at London, and the rolls by which they were paid, are in the commissary general's office; besides that, the musters were usually made in the presence of the rest of the army, so I think it is unnecessary to say any thing more to disprove this fact, however positively asserted. I shall only take notice that these foreign troops were in the joint pay of England and Holland, and always reviewed at the beginning of the campaign, by the Dutch deputies and myself; and as the States paid half those troops, it is a contradiction to imagine that out of complaisance to any body they would have passed them complete, had they not been really so. For the insinuation of two and a half per cent. being given for not mustering the said troops, it is not only a reflection on me, as malicious as 'tis false, but is likewise so on all those kings and princes who furnished these troops, since they consequently must be thought parties in this supposed fraud. As for the allowing the strangers their extraordinaries, according to M. Slingelandt's certificates, it was done on account of the very great exactness and severity the States-general proceeded with in these matters; they requiring all officers concerned in them to take oaths that, by the strictness of the treaties, they were not obliged to. By this means we had the benefit of their extraordinary good husbandry, without drawing on clamour or any application to her majesty, from the princes to whom those troops belonged; notwithstanding which, I always appointed Mr. Cardonel, or some other person duly qualified, to make the necessary inquiries into these things; and upon their report, and my own observation, found a better method could not be established than following the example of the States, for which M. Slingelandt's certificates were the best guide. Though I have a great deal more to offer on this subject, yet I think what I have already

said is not only sufficient to clear me from the aspersions the commissioners have vouchsafed in their great goodness to throw on me, but also to be thought, by all impartial persons, to have deserved thanks, instead of the return I meet with. As these representations have been laid before both houses, it is necessary my justification should be so too. I must, therefore, desire you to take a proper occasion of satisfying their lordships how groundless these reflections are. I am too much persuaded of their justice to doubt of their doing me all the right I can desire. I am ever yours. MARLBOROUGH."

This able reply silenced the charges of the commissioners; and, from this time, the public were no longer deluded and insulted by their malicious and ungrounded accusations.

The private griefs of our illustrious exile, were, however, soon absorbed in his public regrets for the dishonour of England, which was consummated in the peace of Utrecht. Notwithstanding the boasted embassy of Bolingbroke, and the sanguine expectations which were entertained, that the differences between the two crowns were finally adjusted, new sources of controversy arose, from the chicanes of the French cabinet, which Swift softly denominates *refined mistakes* in their policy. The cession of Sicily to the duke of Savoy, though conceded by Louis, was now strenuously resisted. The commercial arrangements, promised in favour of England, were retracted, and the French ministry had even the effrontery to require, that if Holland would not accept the proffered conditions of peace, England should join France in extorting their consent by force of arms.

It was now that the new ministers recognised the errors which they had blindly committed, and felt the heavy responsibility they had wantonly incurred. The shameful tergiversation of the French cabinet extorted a reluctant reproach of ill faith from Bolingbroke; and, with a mixture of vexation and irony, he denounced to Torcy the mischief his sovereign was drawing on himself, by his delusion of those who had confided in his integrity.

To Prior he observes, "I have exhausted all my stock of argument, in the long letter which, by the queen's order, I wrote to the duke of Shrewsbury: To you I shall only add, that we stand indeed on the brink of a precipice; but the French stand there too. Pray tell M. de Torcy from me that he may get Robin and Harry hanged*; but affairs will soon

* Meaning himself and Lord Oxford.

run back into so much confusion that he will wish us alive again. To speak seriously, unless the queen can talk of her interest as determined with France, and unless your court will keep our allies in the wrong, as they are sufficiently at this time, I foresee inextricable difficulties." He concludes with observing, "M. de Torcy has a confidence in you. Make use of it once for all on this occasion, and convince him thoroughly that we must give a different turn to our parliament and people, according to their resolution at this crisis."*

The queen was even under the necessity of aiding the private instances of her ministers, by an official threat of the resumption of hostilities; for the duke of Shrewsbury was at the same time charged to declare, "that she had farther prorogued her parliament to the third of March, in hopes to assure them by that time of her peace being agreed on; for should the two houses meet while any uncertainty remained, supplies must be asked as for a war."†

Louis at length found that he had pushed the servility of his friends to the utmost, and, therefore, announced his tardy acquiescence in the terms which he had so long and repeatedly expressed his readiness to accept. The British plenipotentiaries were accordingly authorised to sign a separate treaty of peace; and the Dutch, the duke of Savoy, and the kings of Prussia and Portugal were, by lures, promises, and threats, induced to follow the example. The emperor, however, with more spirit than prudence, indignantly refused to submit to the dictation either of his friends or enemies; and being supported by the princes of the empire, prepared for the prosecution of the war.

We shall not sully our pages with a more specific account of the negotiation, or the terms of that treaty, which one of our great statesmen justly calls the indelible reproach of the age.‡ Suffice it to observe, that all the articles of the grand alliance, which related to the security of Europe, or the welfare of England, the great objects of this just and successful

* January 19. 1712–1713; — Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 298.

† Swift's Four last Years of Queen Anne; — Works, vol. xvii. p. 335.

‡ Mr. Pitt's despatch to Sir Benjamin Keene; — Memoirs of the Kings of Spain, chap. 57.

war, were either violated or abandoned. A prince of the house of Bourbon was suffered to retain Spain and the Indies; Sicily was separated from the kingdom of Naples, and granted to the duke of Savoy, as an indemnity, though insufficient, for his services. The barrier yielded to the Dutch was, by successive curtailments, rendered little better than an empty name, and held on a tenure calculated to keep up a perpetual irritation with the house of Austria. Bethune, Aire, St. Venant, and, above all, Lisle, the most important point on the frontier, the key of Flanders, and the conquest on which Marlborough most prided himself, were restored to France. The measures adopted to prevent the union of the two monarchies, under the same sovereign, would have proved as futile as they were represented by the French themselves, had the expected death of the puny heir opened a way for the pretensions of Philip to the French crown. To England no real security was given for the preservation of internal peace and tranquillity; the title of the queen was, indeed, acknowledged, and the succession in the Protestant line sanctioned in words; but the pretender was suffered to remain in Lorraine, to the continual agitation of the public mind, and with an evident view of taking the first opportunity to vindicate his claims to the throne, under the auspices of France.

Finally, the important branch of commerce with Spain, and the arrangement relative to the West Indies and America, were left on so uncertain and equivocal foundation, as to occasion perpetual disputes, and ultimately provoke subsequent wars.

The Dutch, irritated by the shameful desertion of their cause, and the sacrifice of their future safety, conceived an aversion to England, which the accession of a new dynasty, and the interval of a century could scarcely obliterate.

Above all, the house of Austria, the only power then capable of balancing France, and the natural ally of England, was treated with still more neglect and indignity. Besides the loss of Spain, the Indies, and Sicily, which had long been identified with Naples, the Netherlands were granted on a tenure, which rendered the sovereignty almost nominal; and the Emperor Charles was compelled to expose, to the indignation of a Bourbon prince, those brave and

faithful Catalans, whose fidelity and sufferings endeared them to his heart, and whose zeal and services merited from England a better fate.

We might fill pages with reflections on the dishonour and infamy of this inglorious peace, which may be regarded as the principal cause of the miseries that for more than a century have prevailed in Europe; but we shall curtail our remarks with the energetic expression of Bishop Fleetwood, in the celebrated preface to his Sermons, "our enemies will tell the rest with pleasure."*

On the 9th of April, when parliament re-assembled, the queen communicated to both houses the satisfactory information, that the treaty of peace was signed, and the ratifications would be speedily exchanged. She then dwelt with particular emphasis on her success, in securing the Protestant succession, and added, "the perfect friendship between me and the house of Hanover, may convince such who wish well to both, and desire the quiet and safety of their country, how vain all attempts are to divide us! and those who would make a merit, by separating our interests, will never attain their ill ends."

The customary motion being made, by the duke of Beaufort, for an address of thanks and congratulation to her majesty, upon the success of her measures for a general peace, an attempt of the opposition to exclude the word "general" was rejected; as was likewise the insertion of a clause, that her majesty would be pleased to lay before the house the treaties of peace and commerce.

On the same day, the Commons also unanimously voted an address of thanks, and negatived a motion for the communication of the treaties. Hence it was justly remarked, that the two houses concurred in addresses of thanks and congratulation, before they knew the specific conditions which they thus prematurely approved.

On the 5th of May, the peace was announced by proclamation, amidst the shouts of the populace, mingled with the murmurs of all true patriots.

The Commons, however, evinced in one instance a recovered sense of their dignity, when the treaties of peace and commerce were communicated to parliament.

* Appendix, note I.

Strong objections were advanced against the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty of commerce, as highly favourable to the trade of France, and equally detrimental to that of England. The opposition was even headed by the speaker, Sir Thomas Hanmer, who had hitherto supported all the measures of government; and the able speech which he made on this occasion, caused the rejection of the bill for confirming the articles, by a majority of 194 against 185.

A trifling compensation, however, was procured by the ministry, through a motion from the speaker, for an address of thanks to the queen, for the treaties of peace and commerce, which, though inconsistent with the former resolution, was carried by a majority of 156 against 72. This was the only specific proof of approbation, which could be obtained from the existing parliament; for the ministers could not venture to propose a farther address of congratulation, and all the indirect attempts of their adherents for that purpose were eluded and frustrated.

Notwithstanding the declaration made by the queen, of her anxiety to maintain the Protestant succession, suspicions were entertained of her sincerity, and the ministers were implicated in the same imputations. Accordingly, on the 30th of June, the earl of Wharton moved an address to the queen, that she would use her most pressing instances, to procure the removal of the pretender from Lorraine, and his exclusion from the territories of all princes and states in amity with her majesty. On this unexpected motion, a solemn pause prevailed; but being supported by Peterborough and other partisans of government, it was carried without a division, notwithstanding some objections, which the treasurer expressed with great earnestness and warmth.

The house appeared surprised at the equivocal answer given by the queen: "I take kindly your address, and your thanks for what I have done to establish the Protestant succession. I shall repeat my instances to have that person removed; and I promise myself you will concur with me, that if we could cure our animosities and divisions at home, it would be the most effectual method to secure the Protestant succession."

When the chancellor reported this answer, many of the peers, however favourable to government, could not suppress

their concern; for even the duke of Buckingham, lord president of the council, frankly observed, that he had never heard of any instances made to the duke of Lorraine, for removing the pretender out of his dominions. The absence of the two ministers on this critical occasion did not escape notice; and it was sarcastically observed, that had they been present, they might have explained the queen's answer, but as they were then at dinner with the duke of Aumont, the French ambassador, Lord Sunderland proposed another address, which was seconded by Lord Nottingham, and carried without opposition. After returning thanks for the reply of the queen to the preceding address, it expressed their surprise, that her instances had not been effectual, and concluded with assurances of supporting her majesty, in a demand so necessary for her own honour and safety, and for the present and future peace and quiet of her people.

The queen, giving no answer to this second address, on the 1st of July, General Stanhope made a similar motion in the House of Commons, in still stronger terms, designating the pretender as the person who, in defiance of her majesty's most undoubted title to the crown, and the settlement to the illustrious house of Hanover, had assumed the title of king of these realms. To this address the queen briefly replied, that she thanked them for it, and would give directions according as they desired.

On the 7th of July, the public thanksgiving for the peace was celebrated at St. Paul's, attended with the usual state, except the presence of her majesty, who, from indisposition, could not assist at the solemnity. On the 16th of July, the queen prorogued the parliament in person, to the 8th of August, and it was on that day dissolved.

Marlborough received regular intelligence of these proceedings in England during his residence at Frankfort. Soon after the prorogation of parliament, he removed to Antwerp, as a more secure asylum during the hostilities in the empire. His feeling heart always sympathised in the sorrow of his friends; and we find a letter of condolence, written before his departure from Frankfort, to his faithful secretary, Cardonel, on the loss of his wife.

"*July* 24. 1713. — I would have written to you sooner, dear Cardonel, if I had believed it possible to say any thing to lessen your grief; but, I

think, of all worldly misfortunes, the losing what one loves is the greatest, and nothing but time can ease you. However, I could not deny myself any longer the satisfaction of writing, to assure you, that I shall always be very sorry for any thing that is a trouble to you, and that I long for the opportunity of assuring you myself, that I am your humble servant and faithful friend.

P. S. The Duchess of Marlborough desires me to assure you of her true friendship and concern for you upon all occasions, and she would have wrote herself, but she thinks this will be the least troublesome to you."

In consequence of the defection of England, and the secession of the other confederates, the Emperor Charles was left to prosecute the war with no other support than the Germanic body. The imperial army, though headed by Eugene, and though more effective and better equipped than usual, could not resist the superior forces of France, commanded by Villars*, a general equally enterprising and skilful, and always fortunate, except when opposed to the transcendent genius of Marlborough. The progress of the Gallic marshal was rapid and irresistible; the imperial troops, after a trifling opposition, retired before him ; and Eugene had the mortification to witness the surprise of Kaiserslaütern, and the surrender of Landau, one of the keys of the empire. After these disasters, the imperial lines were forced, and the campaign closed by the capture of Friburg. The German states being impatient to be delivered from the horrors of an unsuccessful war, Charles, in conformity with the prudent advice of Eugene, entered into a negotiation with France. On the 26th of November, conferences were opened at Rastadt, and the two rival generals, mutually anxious for peace, made expeditious arrangements for a pacification, independent of England and the other allies.

The Duke of Marlborough watched the conferences at Rastadt with an anxious eye. He was conscious that the emperor had sufficient reason to be dissatisfied with the faithless defection of the queen, and was not without alarm, lest he should support the cause of the exiled family, and give one of his nieces in marriage to the pretender, according

* Voltaire has well depicted the character of this gasconading but gallant general,—" Heureux Villars; fanfaron, plein de cœur !"

to a prevalent rumour.* He was, however, speedily gratified with information from Eugene, that this report was wholly unfounded, and that the emperor would not interfere in the internal concerns of England.

"*Rastadt, March* 7. 1714.—I did not write to your highness sooner, because I was uncertain in what manner the present negotiation would terminate. At length I have just concluded with marshal de Villars such a peace as the situation of affairs permits. The restoration of the two electors [of Bavaria and Cologne] was inevitable.

"I am ordered by the emperor to assure your highness, that he still entertains for you the same sentiments of regard, and that he will eagerly seize all opportunities of serving you, should any change take place in England, as there is too much reason to expect. His imperial majesty will always readily concur in all the measures, which the good party in England may desire; and I can sincerely assure you, that in the whole of this negotiation, there is not a single word that regards either the pretender, or England.

"I entreat you to present my humble respects to the Duchess of Marlborough, and to be convinced, that wherever I am, you have not a more sincere friend, on whom you may entirely rely; being, with great veneration," &c.

Soon after the signature of the preliminaries, the conferences were adjourned to Baden, in Switzerland; and, before the close of the year, the definitive treaty was signed between France, the emperor, and the empire.

The observation of Eugene, that England was not mentioned in the treaty was strictly true; and Charles consulted his dignity, by excluding the plenipotentiaries of his treacherous ally from any share in the conferences. The treaty of Ryswic was made the basis of the peace. France secured the peace of Landau, and restored Brisac, Friburg, and Kehl. Charles retained the Low Countries, under the condition of ratifying the barrier treaty; and, by connivance, all the Spanish territories in Italy, excepting Sicily, together with the Island of Sardinia. As he still, however, refused to acknowledge the title of Philip to the crown of Spain, the claims on that monarchy were left for future discussion, or to be decided by future wars.

But the hero who had saved the empire and the house of Austria from ruin, suffered by the restoration of the elector

* It is singular that the treasurer, in a conversation with Lord Cowper, unjustly accused the Duke of Marlborough of being accessory in promoting this supposed marriage.—*Lord Cowper's Diary.*

of Bavaria. It was not to be expected that the British ministry would interpose in favour of a general, whom they had so cruelly persecuted; and, therefore, the principality of Mindelheim was not excepted from the territories which were resumed by the elector.

Marlborough could not anticipate, without regret, the deprivation of a principality, which had been so honourably conferred upon him by Joseph, and which yielded a clear revenue of 2000*l.* per annum. He therefore transmitted, through Prince Eugene, a memorial, claiming from the gratitude of the emperor, an indemnity for the loss of so distinguished and valuable a sovereignty. From the answer of the prince, we find that the court of Vienna retained, at least, the semblance of gratitude for his eminent services.

"*Vienna, May 25.* 1714.— As soon as I received your highness's letter, I did not fail to give the memorial to his imperial and Catholic majesty, who ordered me to assure you, that he will never forget the good services you have rendered him and his family, and that he will contrive that your highness shall keep your sitting, and, in case the restitution of Mindelheim takes place, will indemnify you. You may be assured that I will omit nothing which may be serviceable to you. Of this, the friendship which has always existed between us may convince you. May your highness keep me in yours, and be persuaded of the veneration, &c.

"I beg you to assure the duchess of my profound respect. I do not yet know when I shall depart for Baden."

We soon afterwards find a still stronger assurance from the emperor himself, conveyed through Count Bonneval, to the duchess.

"*Vienna, August* 8.— At the future congress, his imperial majesty will do all that is possible to sustain my lord duke in the possession of the principality of Mindelheim; but if it should so happen, that any invincible difficulty should occur in that affair, his imperial majesty will give his highness an equivalent principality out of his own hereditary dominions."

But all intercession was ineffectual. On the 24th of November, the emperor himself, after formally announcing the reluctant restitution of the Bavarian territories, informed the duke that Mindelheim, so justly and deservedly the reward of his valour, was necessarily included in that restitution; and expressed his hope that he would readily submit to this unavoidable arrangement. His imperial majesty at the same time confirmed his title to the rights and dignity of a prince

of the holy empire, and to a seat in the college of princes; and concluded with assurances of his especial friendship and protection.

Marlborough was not satisfied with these empty honours, and while he respectfully acquiesced in the loss of Mindelheim *, and testified his entire submission to the will of his imperial majesty, he made repeated applications for that indemnity which was justly his due. His illustrious friend, Prince Eugene, supported his pretensions, and was empowered to repeat the assurance of a future indemnity.

"*Vienna, March* 26. 1715.—I send you a letter written three months ago, not having been able to send it by Mr. Stanhope. I waited for a safe opportunity, and, therefore, I chose to make use of Mr. Cadogan †, who will give your highness an account of his commission, and that his imperial and Catholic majesty thinks seriously of a just satisfaction to your highness. This has also made me delay forwarding my first letter, wishing to send you some positive intelligence. We expect a project relative to the Tyrol, and Mr. Cadogan has spoken to me of another place; so that his imperial majesty will determine for one or the other, as soon as he has all proper information. Moreover, I hope the king of England will be aware of the confidence which his majesty reposes in him, and that every thing he does, in regard to the barrier, is in consideration for him. I will say nothing on the present conjuncture. Where you are, you will judge better than us of the business in France, Holland, and your own country. Here we have that of the north and east, which does not fail to employ us.

"I refer myself to Mr. Cadogan, and beg your highness to believe, that no one can be with more sincere friendship, and greater veneration," &c.

Other applications were occasionally made to Counts Zinzendorf and Wratislaw, in the strongest terms, and both the duke and duchess received continual promises of an indemnity from the imperial ministers, in the name of their master. The only difficulty, indeed, seemed to consist in finding a suitable sovereignty, which the emperor had the power of dismembering from his hereditary countries, and a lordship in the Tyrol was repeatedly and specifically indicated, but a final decision was as repeatedly deferred, under the plea of waiting for farther information. ‡ After much delay and

* Reply of Marlborough to the emperor's letter, Dec. 21. 1714.

† General Stanhope and Cadogan were successively sent to Vienna, for the purpose of obtaining the consent of the emperor to the barrier treaty.

‡ Letter from Count Zinzendorf to the duke, Vienna, May 15. 1716.

many fruitless appeals, Marlborough had, at length, the mortification to experience the futility of these assurances. Notwithstanding the repeated promises of the emperor, we cannot discover that he ever received the slightest equivalent, although some misinformed writers have declared the contrary; for as late as 1717, we find him still soliciting a recompence in vain.

He still retained his rank of prince of the empire, and his representative assisted at the diet, the expenses and charges being defrayed by the Austrian treasury. The title of prince, as granted by Joseph, and extending to the female line, was confirmed by Charles; and his illustrious descendant still unites with the possession of Blenheim, the dukedom of Marlborough, and his other honours, the title and bearings of a prince of the holy Roman empire.

To avoid interruption in the subsequent narrative, we have thus terminated the account of this claim on the imperial court. We may conclude with the obvious remark, that the most eminent services are but too often ill requited, when they cease to be necessary or useful. *

Chap. CXI. — Marlborough on the Continent.—1714.

During his residence at Antwerp, Marlborough was held in a perpetual state of suspense, anxiety, and alarm; for England stood on the perilous edge of civil convulsion. From the repeated illnesses of the queen, the time seemed rapidly approaching, when the crown might be contended for on British ground, by the rival candidates, the son of James II., the lineal, but attainted heir, and a member of the house of

* Some authors have erroneously asserted that the duke was gratified with the landgraviate of Nellenburg, and others, with a lordship in the Tyrol; but no trace of such cessions exists in the archives of Austria. Bavaria, the Tyrol, or the empire, nor can any evidence be found, that he received any equivalent in money. Before I quit this subject, I must repeat my obligations to the Bavarian minister, M. de Pfeffel, for procuring me information from the archives of Bavaria and the Tyrol, and to the earl of Normanton, for his assistance in obtaining an examination of the archives at Vienna.

Hanover, appointed by parliament, and acknowledged by the sovereign, as the constitutional successor. In the struggle of contending parties, we observe a queen anxious for the welfare of her subjects, but weak and misguided; agitated by conscientious scruples, in possessing a sovereignty to the exclusion of the legitimate heir, and solicitous to make compensation, by securing to him the reversion of her crown. At the same time we find her so timid and jealous of her authority, as to be no less repugnant to the preparatory measures in favour of a brother, whom she loved, than to those for the elevation of the electoral family, whom she detested. Her vacillation was aggravated by the efforts of the persons in whom she placed her greatest confidence. On one hand, Lady Masham wrought on all her family partialities, and was the agent of continual representations from the courts of St. Germain and Versailles; on the other, she was assailed by the duchess of Somerset, who, like the duchess of Marlborough, no less artfully wrought on her dread of popery, and zeal for the Protestant faith.

Her two principal ministers were also utterly opposed in character, principle, and manners. Oxford possessed integrity, disinterestedness, and morals, united with plausibility, subtlety, and dissimulation. He was sincerely devoted to the Protestant succession; yet, for the preservation of his power, did not hesitate to flatter the courts of St. Germain and Versailles, and to assimilate himself with the Jacobites, for the purpose of obtaining their sanction to the peace. He also affected to court the Whigs, and spared no efforts to conciliate the electoral family. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, was unprincipled, dissipated, and interested. Distinguished for brilliant talents and a fascinating address, he was superior to his rival, both as a courtier and a statesman. Devoted to the Tories, he disdained to imitate Oxford, in soliciting the support of the party from whom he differed in principle; and never condescended to flatter the Whigs, or attempted to cultivate the favour of the house of Hanover.

In the actual state of affairs, Oxford was considered as prime minister, and as enjoying the sole confidence of the queen; but Bolingbroke was rapidly gaining ground, by his superior address, and congeniality of sentiment with his royal mistress. He increased his adherents, by his frank

and decisive character, which was strikingly contrasted with the equivocating and mysterious conduct of his rival.

After several delays, occasioned by the political feuds in the cabinet, and the precarious state of the queen's health, the new parliament assembled, on the 18th of February, 1713–14. Sir Thomas Hanmer, though agreeable to neither of the rival ministers, was again nominated speaker, because they could not concur in the choice of any other person, and he was strongly supported by the Whigs, as friendly to the Hanover line.

The new House of Commons was of a different complexion from any which had preceded. It no longer exhibited the two distinct and hostile bodies of Whigs and Tories, but contained a heterogeneous mass of different parties, counteracting each other, and fluctuating in their opinions and resolutions.

Usually, the friends of government constituted one class acting in concert, and in no case entering the lists of opposition; but in this singular parliament, the adherents of the court were divided into the partisans of Oxford, and the followers of Bolingbroke. The members of this body were united on questions which concerned the general measures of government, but were frequently observed to differ, when the interests of the rival leaders came in collision. Hence, even these auxiliaries successively ranged themselves under the standard of the Whigs, the Tories, or the Jacobites, at the word of their respective chiefs; and it is remarkable, that in the grand question relative to the Protestant succession, they often not only materially differed, but even occasionally appeared to renounce their own principles. One instance of this vacillation deserves to be particularly noticed, as it is related by Bolingbroke himself.

The ministers of the elector of Hanover having solicited the arrears of pay due to his troops, since the separation of the British forces, the treasurer determined to accede to the demand. Without the knowledge of the queen, or any communication with Bolingbroke, auditor Harley, in the committee for preparing the estimates, clandestinely introduced the claim; and it was ordered to be reported to the House, as a part of the yearly supply. Information of this manœuvre being communicated to Bolingbroke, he held a meeting with

the Tories and Jacobites; and are solution being formed to oppose the grant, it was negatived.*

Among the different distinctions which characterised the new House of Commons, the Tories occupied the foremost rank, as the predominant party, but were weakened by a division into Hanoverian and Jacobite Tories. The former were those who were attached to the constitution in church and state, and supported the measures of government, in all instances which did not affect the Protestant succession; but, whenever that grand question was agitated, identified themselves with the Whigs. The leader of this sect was the speaker, Sir Thomas Hanmer.

The sentiments of the Jacobite Tories will be sufficiently indicated by their name; and, in fact, they may be regarded as a class of the Stuart adherents, though less decided in their devotion to the exiled family than the avowed Jacobites.

The Scottish Tories formed a peculiar party. Though united in general with the Jacobites or Tories, they occasionally deserted them, whenever the particular interests of their own country were concerned, or when any hopes of dissolving the Union were entertained. We even find in this parliament a cabal of no less than forty or fifty, closely combined, and acting, on many occasions, in direct opposition to government; until the influence of Bolingbroke seemed likely to prevail over that of his rival, when they were persuaded by his professions again to range themselves under the standard of the court.† With these two last classes the real Jacobites were intermingled, and formed so numerous a body, that with the aid of the crown, and the support of the partisans of Bolingbroke, they hoped to reverse the order of succession established by parliament, and restore the hereditary line.

In the next degree stood the Whigs, an impenetrable phalanx, the never-failing champions of the Protestant succession. Though inferior in numbers to the Tories as a body, their united strength was such, that if they were joined by either of the two Tory divisions, or, as it even sometimes happened, were assisted by the Jacobites, they

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence; — Letter to Lord Strafford, vol. iv. p. 532; — Lockhart's Papers, p. 468.

† Lockart's State Papers, vol. ii. p. 478.

were enabled to constitute a decided majority. In this struggle of conflicting interests, they acted a firm and uniform part, never swerving from the main path of public duty, and careless whom they supported, or whose aid they obtained, provided they succeeded in securing the accession of the Protestant line.

From this incongruous state of the Commons, were derived, as might naturally be expected, fluctuating sentiments and contradictory resolutions, which seemed incomprehensible to all who were unacquainted with the real state of parties, and the variable temper and interests of this heterogeneous body.

In the House of Lords a similar fluctuation prevailed, not from the contention of discordant parties, as in the Commons, but from the conflicting interests of the two rival ministers, and the fears and jealousies of the queen, whose opinion influenced a considerable portion of this illustrious assembly. We derive this interesting delineation of the state of parties from the memoirs of the Jacobite leader, Lockhart; and we find it confirmed in a confidential letter from the secretary himself, to the earl of Strafford.

"*Whitehall, March* 23. 1714. — In both houses there are the best dispositions I ever saw; but I am sorry to tell you that these dispositions are unimproved: the Whigs pursue their plan with good order, and in concert.

"The Tories stand at gaze, expect the court should regulate their conduct, and lead them on; and the court seems in a lethargy. Nothing, you see, can come of this, but what would be at once the greatest absurdity, and the greatest misfortune.

"The minority, and that minority unpopular, must get the better of the majority, who have the sense of the nation on their side. All that can be done, is doing, to prevail on our friend, my lord treasurer, to alter his measures, to renew a confidence with the Tories, and a spirit in them, and to give a regular motion to all the wheels of government. I am sanguine enough to hope that we shall prevail. Indeed, it would be pity to lose by management, what none can wrest by force out of our hands.

"I write thus freely to you, because, in such conjunctures especially, you ought not to be ignorant of the true state of affairs at home, and because I know that the part I ought to act towards a friend, I may safely act towards a man of honour. You shall hear again from me, the moment I see through the present *confused workings of court and party.*"*

* Bolingbroke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 494.

These brief hints will serve to explain the contradictory votes and resolutions of the legislature, in this extraordinary session, and will show how singularly the clashing views of all combined in eventually promoting the great object of the Revolution.

On the 2d of March, the queen addressed the new parliament. After notifying that she had obtained a safe and honourable peace for her own people, and for the greater part of her allies, she expressed hopes, that her interposition might be effectual to complete the restoration of public tranquillity. She then boasted of having delivered her subjects from a consuming land war, and of following the example of the wisest of her predecessors, in preserving the equilibrium of Europe; adding, that the kingdom could only flourish by trade, and would be most formidable, by the right application of its naval force. After the usual demand of supplies, the remainder of the speech evinced extreme anxiety to exonerate herself from suspicions, which she declared to be maliciously circulated, that the Protestant succession in the house of Hanover was in danger under her government.

Addresses of thanks were carried without opposition, and, soon afterwards, the peace was sanctioned by the unanimous vote of the legislature.

But all the declarations of the queen and her ministers could not remove the general impression entertained, that the Protestant succession was really in danger. Accordingly, this delicate question became the principal subject of deliberation, and produced that diversity of sentiment which could not fail to arise in so heterogeneous a body. At one time, the Protestant succession was voted not to be in danger, and the bill against schism inspired the Jacobites with the most sanguine hopes of ultimate success; at another, its perilous state was proved, by the repeated motions for the removal of the pretender from Lorraine; and, above all, by the vote in the House of Lords, proclaiming a reward of 5000*l.* for seizing his person, should he land in England; a reward which was augmented by the Commons to the enormous amount of 100,000*l.* Both these motions were carried without a division.

While the proceedings of the legislature were charac-

teristic of a body actuated by no regular principle, and guided by no common object; the queen and ministers seemed to prove the fallacy of their own professions, by their attempts to break the line of succession.

Men were almost publicly enlisted for the service of the pretender, and his health was openly pledged at numerous meetings and clubs, held by Jacobites of all ranks and denominations in the metropolis. The army was beginning to be new-modelled, colonels were removed from their regiments, and replaced by others of the Stuart party. Governors were deprived of their posts, and superseded by those of adverse principles; the direction of affairs in Ireland and Scotland was intrusted to Jacobite hands.

In this alarming crisis, the clamours for the residence of the electoral prince in England, were revived with increasing vehemence. As he had already been created duke of Cambridge, it was only necessary to obtain the customary summons to the House of Lords. In conformity, therefore, with the advice of the Whigs, Baron Schutz, the Hanoverian resident, applied for the writ. The chancellor, objecting that it was not usual to grant writs to peers who resided out of the kingdom, was confounded with a reply, that the prince intended to reside, and might be expected in England before it was issued. After some farther delays and objections, under the plea of preserving due respect for the queen, it was at length reluctantly granted.

The queen was extremely agitated by this sudden and unexpected proceeding, and wrote several letters to the electoral family, in which she earnestly deprecated such contemptuous disregard of her prerogative, exhorting them, in the strongest terms, not to give countenance to a measure, no less insulting to her feelings, than derogatory to the dignity of her crown. Baron Schutz was also forbidden to appear at court, and quitted England to convey the writ to Hanover.

In the midst of these political feuds, the queen prorogued the parliament, with a speech indicative of high indignation. After the usual thanks for the supplies, she expressed her hope to meet them again early in the winter, in such a temper as would be necessary, for improving all the advantages of the peace. She then concluded in a tone, which

shows how deeply she resented the intended residence of the electoral prince in England: — "My chief concern is, to preserve to you and to your posterity our holy religion, and the liberty of my subjects, and to secure the present and future tranquillity of my kingdoms. But I must tell you plainly, that these desirable ends can never be obtained, unless you bring the same dispositions on your parts; unless all groundless jealousies, which create and foment divisions amongst you, be laid aside; and unless you show the same regard for my prerogative, and for the honour of my government, as I have always expressed for the rights of my people."

During these political conflicts in his native country, Marlborough maintained an unremitted intercourse with his friends, and was still ready to support that cause for which he had fought and conquered, and for his adherence to which he had been driven into exile. Had he chosen to desert his party, and vindicate the peace of Utrecht, he might yet have recovered the favour of the queen, and enjoyed the protection of the ministers; he might have been exempted from all the persecutions to which his opposition exposed him.

But we find him abroad, consistently persevering in the same honourable path, and labouring to promote that Protestant succession in the house of Hanover, which he considered as essential to the welfare of England, and the tranquillity of Europe. Nor do we perceive, in his conduct, the slightest fluctuation of sentiment, notwithstanding the opprobrious accusations levelled against him by Jacobite spies, and repeated by partial or misguided historians. Few letters or documents are preserved at Blenheim relating to this critical era; but those that remain, as well as his correspondence, published among the Hanover Papers, indubitably prove his undeviating anxiety in the cause of liberty and religion. Convinced, also, that his native country was menaced with a counter-revolution, he sent General Cadogan, to make the necessary arrangements with General Stanhope, and the leaders of the Hanoverian interest*, for transporting troops to England, on the demise of the queen, and for

* This fact is stated from the narrative of the duchess, and confirmed by the accusations of Bolingbroke and the Jacobites, and the testimonies in the Hanover Papers.

taking every precaution to frustrate the hopes of the Jacobites. He even engaged to use his endeavours in securing the fidelity of the troops stationed at Dunkirk, and to embark at their head, in support of the same cause. He also urged the elector of Hanover not to spare his treasure in gaining adherents, and offered to assist him with a loan of 20,000*l.* So gratified, indeed, was the electoral house with these proofs of his zeal, that, in return, the electress Sophia intrusted him with a blank warrant, appointing him commander-in-chief of her troops and garrisons, on her accession to the crown.

These measures are detailed in his letters to the court of Hanover, and we should deem it injustice to his memory not to submit to the reader this interesting correspondence, although a part has been already given to the public.* Robethon, his former correspondent, and now the confidential secretary at Hanover, was the principal channel of these communications.

The Duke of Marlborough to Robethon.

"*Antwerp, Nov.* 30. 1713. — Sir; I have not troubled you since my coming to this place, because nothing of the least consequence has offered; but Mr. Cadogan being now returned from England, with an account of the present situation of things, and disposition of people's minds there, I thought it necessary to take notice in general to you of it, and, at the same time, acquaint you, I shall send him to the Hague in some few days, to communicate all matters to M. Bothmar, in order to his transmitting, in the most ample manner, to his electoral highness, the sentiments and thoughts of our friends in England, concerning the unhappy condition we are in, which, I am sorry to tell you, grows worse every day, and will very soon be desperate, unless some speedy remedy is applied. Though the whole conduct of our ministry, both as to affairs at home and abroad, leaves no room to doubt of their intentions to bring in the pretender; yet I cannot forbear mentioning some circumstances relating to it, which have happened since the last sessions of parliament. I shall begin with our court's entering into a stricter and greater union with France than ever, notwithstanding the collusive manner with which the French king has evaded executing those articles made with England, which were for our advantage; and as the highest and most convincing mark of the double-dealing and pernicious designs of our ministers. I shall, in the next place, instance their affectation of writing to such princes, not to receive the pretender, into whose countries they are sure he will never come; and their making no step in earnest towards the

* Hanover Papers for 1713 and 1714; — Macpherson, vol. ii.

removing him out of Lorraine, notwithstanding the addresses of both houses, and that his being there or in France is the same thing. By which means, the article in the treaty of peace, for the security of the Protestant succession, is eluded. To this must be added; the giving all employments, military and civil, to notorious Jacobites; the putting the governments of Scotland and Ireland into the hands of two persons who are known friends to the pretender*; the choosing the sixteen lords to serve for Scotland, of whom, two were with the pretender last summer, and most of the rest declared Jacobites; the ministers receiving, with such distinction, Sir Patrick Lawless, and, under the pretence of his transacting the business of Spain, admitting him into their confidence and privacy, though an Irish papist, and an avowed agent of the pretender's; the violence and force used in the election of members for the city of London; the invading the freedom of elections all over the kingdom, by corruption, oppression, and bribery, in order to get such persons chosen as are in the interest of the pretender; the animating the clergy to preach up hereditary and testamentary right, both which principles are destructive to the succession; the encouraging the publishing that pernicious book, lately writ to support those doctrines, which, though high treason by our laws, yet this book†, which asserts them, was writ either by direction or connivance of the lord treasurer, as may be judged by the following circumstances: First, the materials for it were collected either out of manuscripts in his own library, or out of such public records as Mr. Lowndes was known to have been employed in the search of: lord treasurer's library keeper corrected the manuscript, and the printing of the book was published in the Gazette; and though the printer was taken up, for form's sake, the sale of the book is openly permitted, and great numbers of them sent gratis all over the kingdom.

"Many instances of the same nature might be joined to these I have mentioned; but I think these more than sufficient to demonstrate the views of the ministry, and the danger of delaying any longer the entering into effectual measures for the preventing of them. But as this matter is of the highest moment, and that the safety of our religion, property, and liberty, will depend upon the resolutions to be now taken, our friends in England submit every thing to his electoral highness's great wisdom and discretion, and will execute with zeal and pleasure, whatever instructions or orders he shall please to give them in this most important affair. However, they believe themselves obliged, at the same time, both in duty to his electoral highness, and out of concern for the safety and good of their country, to represent in the most humble and submissive manner, that, considering the present state of things in England, nothing can so effectually assure the succession, as his electoral highness going there, or, if that cannot be hoped for, the sending the prince, which would animate to the greatest degree all those of both parties who wish well to the succession, and break the measures of those who are against

* The Earl of Mar and Sir Constantine Phipps.

† This book is entitled, "The hereditary Right of the Crown of England asserted."—See Boyer's Reign of Queen Anne.

it: But, though this is the unanimous sense of our friends in England, yet they leave, and wholly submit, it to his electoral highness's prudence and judgment, and desire that this their advice may be understood to proceed from hearts full of affection and unalterable attachment to his electoral highness's person and interests; for the promoting of which they will be always ready to venture their lives and fortune. As I write you this in the last confidence, I desire it may be communicated only to his electoral highness and M. Bernstorf; and, for fear of accidents, you will be pleased afterwards to burn it. I am with truth, yours."

Nor did our illustrious patriot confine his cares and exertions to his own country; he no less earnestly employed that influence which he possessed in Holland, to awaken the States to a sense of the danger with which they were menaced, should the British ministry succeed in their attempts to overthrow the constitution. With the same view, he laboured to restore that harmony, which had been interrupted between the emperor and the republic, and which he justly considered as essential to the tranquillity of Europe, and the welfare of England.

He developes these views in another letter to Robethon.

"*Antwerp, Jan* 6. 1714.—By the accounts Mr. Cadogan brings from the Hague, as well as by what has been writ from thence, it is evident the principal regents of the republic begin to be now convinced of the designs of the English ministry to bring in the pretender; and, since the destruction of their state must inevitably follow, they have warmly taken the alarm, and seem disposed to enter into any measures towards preventing it, which the form of their government will allow of. And, as they very well know, a strict friendship with the emperor and empire is absolutely necessary for attaining this great end, they are, at present, very desirous to reconcile themselves to his imperial majesty; but the managements they are outwardly forced to keep with France and the English ministry, obliging them to proceed in this matter, with the utmost secrecy and caution, they are resolved to transact it privately, by such friends as both sides have an entire confidence in; and, to show how much they are in earnest, they appear inclined to recede from several advantages given them by their barrier treaty. As his imperial majesty has likewise the interest of England at heart, and believes his own safety concerned in securing the succession of his electoral highness and family, it is hardly to be doubted, but such temperaments may be found, by the common friends aforementioned, as will re-establish the former union between the emperor and the republic; which matter being explained in the memorials transmitted by M. Bothmar, I must refer to them.

"For the expedient you mentioned, of an address of thanks for the good offices employed, and endeavours used to remove the pretender, and the grounding an invitation on their having proved ineffectual, I shall take the liberty, since you desire my private opinion, to tell you

freely, I am apprehensive that matters may be so artfully managed by the court, as to get the first part of the proposition passed, and the other dropt; the ill consequences of which are so obvious, that it is not necessary to explain them. However, if his electoral highness shall not approve of what our friends in England have humbly represented, they will be ready to execute, with all the zeal and fidelity imaginable, this or any other thing his electoral highness shall judge for his service; and, since the ministers drive on matters so fast in favour of the pretender, every body must agree, if something farther be not done in the next sessions of parliament towards securing the succession, it is to be feared it may be irretrievably lost. Mr. Cadogan returns in about fourteen days to the Hague, in order to receive his electoral highness's commands from M. Bothmar, in relation to what he is to say to our friends, at his return into England. I am ever yours."

Oxford could not be unacquainted with the negotiations between the electoral family and the Hanoverian party in England, through the agency of Marlborough. This subtle politician, therefore, resorted to his usual craft, to counteract the labours of his opponents, and to turn their intrigues against themselves. He had already persuaded the queen to express in her speeches unusual regard towards the electoral family, and even induced her to assume an appearance of cordiality, which was foreign to her feelings. Perceiving that this semblance of harmony between the two courts was peculiarly mortifying to the Whigs, he carried his dissimulation still farther, by sending his relative, Mr. Harley, to Hanover, to convey testimonies of the queen's solicitude for the Protestant succession, and his own devotion to the electoral family.

This unexpected mission created considerable jealousy among the adherents of the house of Hanover. To counteract its effects, Marlborough sent Mr. Molyneux, an Irish gentleman of fortune, to the electoral court; and in his correspondence with Robethon, his confidential correspondent at Hanover, strove to expose the duplicity of the treasurer, and the danger of listening to his overtures.

"*Antwerp, May 5.* 1714.—It is so evident that the queen's ministers are determined to place the pretender on the throne, that it would be losing one's time to produce proofs of it. Their greatest desire, and their only view in Mr. Harley's embassy is, to obtain some declaration from the elector, which may impose upon the nation, and make it believe that your court is satisfied with them. If you have fallen into this snare, it will render all the efforts of your friends of no avail; but we rely upon the great prudence of his electoral highness.

" A more proper time for demanding the writ for the electoral prince could not have been chosen; for you see how many of the richest and most considerable among the Tories declare for you, and acknowledge that they were deceived by the ministry, who lose so much ground in both houses, that you may depend upon it they will take care not to call the second session of this parliament before they have executed their design in favour of the pretender. Otherwise, they will run a risk of being prosecuted for having betrayed their country and violated the laws; and as they cannot justify themselves in that respect, it is not to be believed that they will expose themselves to the hazard of another session; for if they lose any more ground, however small, their ruin is certain.

" Luckily, this session is to continue for two months longer, as no supplies are yet found; so that the electoral prince will have time enough, before the end of it, to arrive and take his seat in parliament, in which case the balance will incline entirely to your side, as it begins to do already upon the mere rumour of his coming; so that you may judge what effect his presence would produce. Accordingly, our friends write to me, in that case, the parliament will not rise before they have settled a pension of 40,000*l.* sterling, for a subsistence to the prince, who will have nothing to do but to make his court to the queen, and caress the ministers, without meddling in any thing. By this remedy the succession will be secured without risk, without expense, and without war; and, likewise, it is very probable that France, seeing herself prevented in that manner, will abandon her design of assisting the pretender.

" In my humble opinion it would be proper to use despatch, and that the prince should set out before Lord Paget arrives.* This journey of the prince, attended with the success which there is reason to expect from it, cannot fail to give the elector new influence and much greater consequence over all Europe, as he will secure to himself thereby the crown of Great Britain, which will attach the emperor, Holland, and the court of Prussia to him, and render him the arbiter of the differences of the north. Whereas, if this opportunity is lost (which, according to appearances, will be the last), the contrary will happen, and the influence of his electoral highness at other courts will suffer considerably by it, especially after the great noise which this demand of the writ for the electoral prince makes every where, which leaves no one room to doubt of his setting out soon; so that if he does not set out at all, your friends in England, who have exposed themselves so generously for your interest, will be absolutely ruined, and the succession in the utmost danger, which cannot fail to be productive of bad consequences to your court, and in all the other courts of Europe.

" It is easy for your court to conceive of what importance it is that the prince should arrive while the parliament is sitting, as the reason to justify his journey is the right he has to take his seat in parliament, and the writ by which the queen calls him to it. I hope you will send me good news.

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* Lord Paget was nominated envoy to Hanover on the return of Mr. Harley from his temporary mission.

"I believe Mr. Molyneux will be now at your court. I recommend him to you as being a man of quality, who has very large possessions in Ireland, but principally as a man of parts and merit, with whose good principles I am well acquainted. I flatter myself that he will be well received by their highnesses. I am, &c.

"I may add, farther, that the prince being but the third in the order of succession, and coming alone, without troops, the queen cannot be justly offended."

The subsequent letter, which, though without date or address, was evidently written to Robethon * in May, is worthy of particular attention. It does credit to the comprehensive mind of Marlborough, who overlooked the narrow distinctions of party in his zeal for the public weal, and endeavoured to unite the moderate Tories, as well as the Whigs, in defence of the legal settlement. It collaterally enables us to trace his motives for not signing the Whig association †, which he evidently considered as an expedient calculated to render this great public concern a mere object of party.

"M. Bothmar has sent me a copy of the letter concerning the observations that were made at Barleduc.‡ I believe there may be inconvenience in sending the original letter; but I think if M. Schutz has a copy of it, with orders to communicate the substance to all our friends, both Whigs and Tories, 'tis probable it may have a good effect; and if they find it will be useful to produce the original, it will be in your power to do it.

"I am so certain of what her majesty and the ministers design, as to the succession, and it is so evident to all mankind that have any sense, that I will not take up your time in arguments upon that matter, nor trouble you with instances, to show how little it can signify to have their promises upon any account. I am persuaded, if words would serve at this time, they will make very little difficulty to say any thing, in order to draw from the electress an answer that would give them but a handle to impose upon the nation that is satisfied, which, no doubt was the whole design of Mr. Harley's embassy; and would, for ever, have ruined the endeavours of our best friends, and disabled them from doing any service to the elector or their country. But I don't doubt of his high-

* It is from a copy in the handwriting of the duchess, and endorsed by her, "To a Correspondent at Hanover."

† Tindal, vol. xviii. Dr. Birch, who wrote this part of the history, states that Sir Richard Onslow was deputed by General Stanhope and the Whig leaders to obtain the signature of Marlborough to this association, but that all his representations failed of success.

‡ The temporary residence of the pretender in Lorraine.

ness's taking effectual care to prevent such a mischief; and since so many of the considerable Tories have owned publicly that they have been deceived by the ministers, 'tis reasonable to expect they should do something to secure their religion and laws, and not trust them in the hands of men that have so plainly betrayed their country. If something of this kind is not done before the parliament rises, I can't but apprehend these ministers will prevent being troubled with another; for the mask is now taken off, and men that have so little to say for themselves, will not run the hazard of another session. Upon these considerations, and some others, I can't but wish extremely that his electoral highness would use all the means that are possible to show the honest men in both parties the danger they are in at a time that France is in so good a condition; and as nothing can save us from the mischiefs intended but the parliament, it is my humble opinion that it should show that 'tis necessary there should be a farther security for the Protestant succession; and one great thing towards that, they must needs think, is an honest ministry. Pray do me the favour to give my humble service to M. Bernsdorf. As for having two in the Admiralty, I think that or any other request would be of no use but to give advantages to those that certainly mean nothing but to deceive."

Fortunately, the subtlety of Oxford defeated itself. Unable or unwilling to give a definitive proof of his sincerity, his extravagant professions, when contrasted with his real conduct, made the mission of his relative appear no less insulting than ridiculous. Mr. Molyneux, in a letter to the duchess, briefly gives the result of this memorable embassy.

"*May* 7. 1714. — I would to God I could send you as good news from hence as your grace sends me when you say there is hope of my having the honour to see you in a country-house in England. I have not yet been at court, but when I have, I shall have the honour to write to you again. As yet, I have only heard that Mr. Harley's forerunners had made a great noise of what he was coming to do for this family. A pension to the electress, and invitation to the electoral prince, were as positively given out to be his business here, as that he was to come. But, since his arrival, this is all dwindled into nothing; we hear no more of these things, and his great promises to the court amount to no more than the giving an office of 400*l.* per annum to one Wind, an English chamberlain to the electress, and a Tory, for which and for another accident that happened here some days since, they tell me he will certainly be disgraced."

"*Hanover, Friday, May* 18. 1714. — This day, I think, it is about ten days since I arrived at Hanover, so that I am now able to assure your grace and my lord duke of the perfect regard and affection this court preserves for both your merits, which, on a thousand occasions, I have had the pleasure to perceive in every body I have conversed with, as well as in the court itself. The electoral princess, who is certainly one of the best ladies in the world, does nothing but ask me the most affectionate questions possible about your grace and my lord, about your manner of pass-

ing your time, how you are diverted, and whether you are easy; and, in short, one would think she had seen and been intimate with you, she seems to love you so well. I cannot give your grace a better instance of the regard they have to any thing that comes from my Lord Marlborough than to assure you that I have been very well received by every body here, only by having the honour of his protection.

On Tuesday last Mr. Harley and all his suite went away for England. I believe he is as little satisfied with his negotiation here as the court is; for I hear he has had very plain and strong memorials given him, on his departure, as to what may be done on the succession; and I know that on taking leave he had some pretty plain things said to him on the state of affairs. The electoral princess told me herself, that on this occasion, when he spoke of the present happiness of Europe in peace, and in a prospect of every thing now flourishing and doing well, she made him this answer, that nobody had a firmer trust in God and Providence than she had, and, therefore, she did not doubt every thing would do well and flourish."

Mr. Harley had scarce taken his departure before Baron Schutz arrived with the writ for summoning the duke of Cambridge, and, at the same time, bearing the most pressing invitations from the Hanoverian party for his immediate departure to England. At the same time, letters arrived from the queen and treasurer, containing the warmest professions of regard to the electoral family.

These incidents created great hesitation in the court of Hanover, as we find from further details in the letters of Mr. Molyneux.

"*May* 29. 1714. — Your account of the reconciliation of the sorcerer and his familiar * seems very credible; at least, we may be sure that it is fear draws any honest protestations from them. I should never have given ear to these protestations before, but since I am at Hanover much less than ever; and, indeed, it is here as plain as that † is the worst woman in the world, that she is not affected to this house, or, at least, her ministers are quite otherwise. It were as endless as useless to give your grace instances of this, but I must have leave to run over a few. There are now seven packets due from M. Krayenberg ‡ to this court, though all the other letters of the said posts are come constantly to Hanover. During Harley's stay here, by him, and since by another hand, Chateauneuf, at the Hague, knows more of the proceedings here than we do, who are in the town; but, above all, of the letters from the queen to the elector and electress, which the electress showed me. Nothing can be

* Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke.

† A word is omitted which evidently refers to the queen.

‡ Krayenberg was the Hanoverian minister in London, and Chateauneuf, the French minister at the Hague.

more kind in the world, and lord treasurer's the same; and yet the plain design is visibly nothing else but to draw a confession from this house that they are satisfied with the ministry, and have a confidence in a good understanding with the queen. This was the point to be carried by Harley's journey and by those letters; but he was terribly disappointed, for in the answers there was not a word of such good understanding; but there was an article to this effect, in the elector's answer, which I read, 'that he thought it would be mutually good for both their interests that some one of this house should have the honour to pay his court to the queen in England.' This article was carried with great difficulty in the council here, and is the only step made to support the demand of the prince's writ; and, which is more, is the only one which I believe will be made. I am sure my Lord Marlborough knows this court so well, he can believe this, but if he won't, I can say no more but that it is my opinion, and that I am more amazed at the difficulties the succession meets here than at those it meets in London. I do believe the prince will not go over, and for this session it is almost despaired of by his best friends; God knows what may happen before the next. For my part, I prepare myself for poverty and banishment; and I no more employ my thoughts on the happiness of England, but where to find the most easy retreat. This is a melancholy prospect; the grounds of it are too long to tell you; but I would to God it were not true. There are here such humours, such jealousies, and such villanies as will one day undo us, if it be not done already. I find no time better to end than by cutting off this disagreeable tale, in giving myself the pleasure to assure your grace, &c.

"I shall stay here till what I suspect is made public, and then I think I shall go on northwards."

In the midst of this doubt and hesitation, a messenger brought other letters from the queen and the treasurer. Finding that they could not cajole the electoral family by professions, they resorted to threats, in order to prevent the prince from availing himself of his summons to parliament.

The letter to the prince was bitter and reproaching, chiding him for giving ear to such expedients as the demand of the writ, without knowing her majesty's sentiments. The letter to the electress was somewhat more guarded, but coupled with a menace too obvious to be mistaken. That to the elector was written in a tone of still greater indignation. After repeating her anxious wishes for promoting the settlement, the queen added, "I am firmly persuaded you would not suffer the smallest diminution of your authority. I am no less delicate in this respect; and I am determined to oppose a project so contrary to my royal authority, however fatal the consequences may be."*

* The two former letters, as well as that of the treasurer, are printed in

The letter from Oxford was perfectly characteristic. After professing his own attachment to the electoral family and their interests, he recommended the electress to rely implicitly on the friendship of the queen, as the only means of securing the accession of her family; and earnestly dissuaded her from identifying her interests with those of the Whigs, by dwelling on the danger and impolicy of making the narrow measures of a party the standard of her future government.

By order of the electress, copies of these letters were sent to the Duke of Marlborough; and, in transmitting them, Mr. Molyneux gives an interesting detail of the effect they produced.

"*Hanover, Thursday, June* 7. 1714. — I am directed by the electress to send your grace the enclosed, which arrived at Hanover, by express, on Tuesday, but were not delivered till yesterday at noon. I have not time, or I had translated the queen's for you; but my lord will explain them to you, and let you know that there is no hand villanous enough to write them but that one from whence they come. This court is so openly honest in their proceedings, that they would be glad to disperse these letters among their friends in England; whereas their correspondence is so false and hidden, as that the express declared, till the moment the letters were read, that they were to invite the prince over, and I would lay my life the ministers declare the same in London."

In fact, the result was still more fatal than was at first apprehended; for the aged electress was so deeply affected with the anxiety of the moment, that her feeble frame appears to have sunk under the conflict of contending passions. The circumstances of her sudden death are detailed with no less feeling than interest, in a subsequent letter from Mr. Molyneux.

"*Hanover, June**, 1714. —The last post I finished my letters about six in the evening. Not an hour after the post went, I went directly afterwards to Hernhausen, the country-house of the court, and there the first thing I heard was, that the good old electress was just dying in one of the public walks. I ran up there, and found her just expiring in the arms of the poor electoral princess, and amidst the tears of a great many

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Boyer's Political State, and in other publications; but that to the elector was deemed so insulting, that he found it necessary to apologise for its omission. It is, however, introduced into Macpherson's Hanoverian Papers, vol. ii. p. 621.

* The electress died on the 28th of May, o. s., which fixes the date of this letter about the 9th of June.

of her servants, who endeavoured in vain to help her. I can give you no account of her illness, but that I believe the chagrin of those villanous letters I sent you last post has been in a great measure the cause of it. The Rheingravine, who has been with her these fifteen years, has told me she never knew any thing make so deep an impression on her as the affair of the prince's journey, which, I am sure, she had to the last degree at heart; and she has done me the honour to tell me so twenty times. In the midst of this concern those letters arrived, and those I verily believe have broke her heart, and brought her with sorrow to the grave. The letters were delivered on Wednesday at noon. That evening when I came to court, she was at cards, but was so full of these letters, that she got up and ordered me to follow her into the garden, where she gave them to me to read, and walked, and spoke a great deal in relation to them. I believe she walked three hours that night. The next morning, which was Thursday, I heard she was out of order; and on going immediately to court, she ordered me to be called into her bed-chamber. She gave me the letters I sent you to copy; she bid me send them next post, and bring them afterwards to her to court. That was on Friday. In the morning on Friday, she told me she was very well, bnt seemed very chagrined. She was dressed, and dined with the elector as usual. About four she did me the honour to send me to town, for some other copies of the same letters, and then she was still perfectly well. She worked and talked very heartily in the Orangerie. After that, and about six, she went out to walk in the gardens, and was still very well. A shower of rain came, and as she was walking pretty fast, to get to shelter, they told her she walked a little too fast. She answered, 'I believe I do,' and dropped down in saying those words, which were her last. They raised her up, chafed her with spirits, tried to bleed her; but it was all in vain, and when I came up to her, she was as dead as if she had been four days so. No princess ever died more regretted, and I infinitely pity those servants that have known her a long time, when I, that have had the honour to be known to her but a month, can scarce refrain from tears in relating this."

The death of the electress Sophia made a considerable alteration in the state of parties in England, as well as in the situation of the Duke of Marlborough.

Notwithstanding her advanced age of eighty-four, she possessed, till the time of her death, an unusual degree of spirit and energy, saying, that if she could but live to have "Sophia, Queen of England," engraven on her tomb, she should die contented. She had manifested considerable jealousy of her son's interference in the affairs of England, and she expressed great eagerness for the journey of the electoral prince. She was more inclined to the Tories than to the Whigs, held a confidential correspondence with the earl of Strafford, and implicitly confided in the Duke of

Marlborough, to whom she readily intrusted the fullest powers for the furtherance of her accession.

Her death, however, relieved the elector from considerable difficulties: he was no longer controlled by her authority, and was enabled to adopt an uniform and consistent plan of conduct. Although he placed his principal reliance on the Whigs, yet being of a prudent and cautious temper he did not neglect the Tories. Declining to irritate the queen, by permitting his son to accept the invitation to England, refusing to expend his treasure in strengthening his interest, or to interfere in factious cabals, he appeared almost too indifferent to stretch out his hand to the sceptre, which was within his grasp; and adroitly left his interests to the management of his adherents and agents. Although he treated the Duke of Marlborough with a semblance of respect, he never forgot the supposed slight which he had experienced in 1708, when Marlborough concealed from him the projected operations of the campaign.* This jealousy had been recently fomented by the artifices of Oxford, who did not fail, by means of Mr. Harley, to bring into view the former correspondence of Marlborough with the house of Stuart. The elector, however, was too circumspect, to suffer any public manifestation of these prejudices to escape him; but encouraged Marlborough to persevere in his exertions, and to identify himself with the Hanoverian party in England.

CHAP. CXII. — DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE. — 1714.

MEANWHILE the vessel of state was tossed on a stormy sea, and exposed to imminent danger of shipwreck, by the rivalry of the two pilots, who were contending for the helm.

Oxford, by his artful duplicity, in paying court successively to every party, had rendered himself equally contemptible to all. He had offended the queen by his overtures to the electoral family, and had not succeeded in obtaining their confidence. In this critical situation, his only dependence

* See chapters 65 and 68.

rested on the favour of the sovereign; but in her mind a sinister change had taken place. She was beset by Lady Masham, whom he had alienated by his opposition to the grant of a pension, and other emoluments, which she was anxious to obtain. She was also wrought upon by the artful representations of Bolingbroke, who affected to develope his intrigues with the court of Hanover, and accused him even of caballing with the Duke of Marlborough.

But habit, and the remains of partiality for the minister, who had delivered her from the control of the Whigs, together with the natural indecision of the queen's temper, protracted his fall; and it was not till his sentence was passed by the courts of St. Germain and Versailles, that she consented to remove him from her service.* Those courts finding that Oxford constantly eluded their demands for a restoration, and deceived them by repeated promises which were never fulfilled, made Lord Bolingbroke the agent of their schemes and the channel of their communications, and hoped, through his ministry, to gain the grand object of their wishes. We learn, from the authentic testimony of Berwick, who managed the secret correspondence with the Stuart party, that this was the real cause of Oxford's removal, and that his disgrace excited the most sanguine hopes of success.

After many struggles in the mind of the queen, she resumed the white staff on the 27th of July. An indecorous altercation took place in her presence between the two rivals for power, in which the treasurer coarsely observed, amidst many other reproachful expressions, that he would leave some people as low as he found them. The feelings of the queen were deeply affected with this disgraceful scene, which continued until two in the morning; and she retired in a

* We do not hesitate to assert this fact, because it is evident from the declarations of the duke of Berwick, who gives a long detail of the secret correspondence which Oxford maintained with him through the agency of Gualtier and Torcy, and the mode in which the wily treasurer duped the court of St. Germain. He also developes the plan which they pursued to obtain his removal, and informs us that the wishes of the exiled family were imparted to the queen, through the duke of Ormond and Lady Masham, who being at this time both intimately connected with Bolingbroke, we cannot doubt his participation. — *Mémoires de Berwick*, tom. ii. 196-206.

state of extreme agitation, without announcing any other ministerial arrangement.

From this moment Bolingbroke was considered as virtually the prime minister, and as the person who was to organise the new administration. His first measure was calculated to cajole the Whigs and moderate Tories. On the ensuing day, he gave a political dinner to Stanhope, Walpole, and other members of the Hanoverian party, and lavished assurances that he would promote the Protestant succession. But when the Whigs demanded, as a pledge of his sincerity, that the pretender should be removed from Lorraine, he frankly declared his inability to obtain the consent of the queen to what she deemed the banishment of her brother.* Meanwhile, he gave his whole confidence to the Jacobites, and laboured to form an administration in which they were to be predominant. As far as we can ascertain from the authentic writings of the day, the great official situations were to be thus filled. The treasury was to be put into commission, at the head of which was Sir William Wyndham; Bolingbroke himself was to retain the seals as secretary of state, with the sole management of the foreign correspondence; Bromley was to continue his colleague; the earl of Mar secretary of state for Scotland; the duke of Ormond commander-in-chief; Lord Harcourt chancellor; the duke of Buckingham lord president of the council; the earl of Strafford head of the board of Admiralty, and the privy seal was to be transferred to Atterbury, bishop of Rochester.† Measures were also continued for remodelling the army, and securing possession of the forts, arsenals, and outports.

Such an administration being completely Jacobite in its constituent parts, no doubt can remain as to the ultimate object. Fortunately, however, this arrangement never took place. On the 29th, the agitation of the queen's mind having increased, the imposthume in her leg was suddenly checked. Her constitutional gout flew to her brain, and she sunk into a state of stupefaction, broken by occasional fits of delirium.

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. 8.

† Almost all the members of this projected administration were avowed Jacobites. Three, including Bolingbroke, followed the pretender; one, the bishop of Rochester, was attainted; and Sir William Wyndham was arrested in 1715, as a favourer of the rebellion.

Bolingbroke employed this awful interval of suspense in accelerating his political arrangements ; and the most alarming apprehensions seized upon all the well-wishers to the Protestant succession. The Whigs, however, were not inactive. They had already entered into a formal association, nominated officers, collected arms and ammunition, enregistered troops, and were preparing to take the necessary precautions on the demise of the queen, to obtain possession of the fortresses and outports of the kingdom, to seize the Tower, and to adopt every possible precaution for proclaiming the constitutional king. By the agency of Marlborough, they were also secure of the powerful garrison stationed at Dunkirk, and expected his arrival with impatience, as the means of influencing the army.

In the midst of these mutual exertions, the indisposition of the queen increased; and a committee of the privy council were sitting in a chamber of the royal palace of Kensington, to make the most prompt and effectual arrangements on the expected event.

Fortunately, among the members present was the duke of Shrewsbury, who, by his patriotic conduct at this awful moment, compensated for his past duplicity. In his embassy at Paris, and in his office of lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he had not co-operated with the views of the Jacobites, but had proved himself an active friend to the Protestant cause. In the quarrels between the rival ministers, he had acted with his characteristic indecision, but adhered in general to Oxford, whom he justly considered as the least dangerous of the two. He now saw that the crisis was arrived for adopting a decisive line of conduct.

We have no precise information on the subjects which occupied the attention of the committee; but the members were confounded by the firmness and promptitude of the Hanoverian party. In the midst of their discussion, the dukes of Argyle and Somerset suddenly entered the council-chamber, and said, that understanding the danger of the queen, they had hastened to offer their assistance. In the pause of surprise which ensued, the duke of Shrewsbury rose and thanked them for their offer. Having taken their seats, they proposed an examination of the physicians ; and on their report, that the queen was in imminent danger, it

was resolved that the post of lord treasurer should be filled without delay, and that the duke of Shrewsbury should be recommended to the queen. Bolingbroke and his partisans were thunderstruck, and made no opposition; and, with the approbation of the physicians, a deputation of the members waited upon her majesty, and declared the unanimous opinion of the council. The queen, who was incapable of exertion, faintly approving the choice, delivered the staff to Shrewsbury, and bade him use it for the good of her people. The same afternoon Lord Somers shook off his bodily infirmities, and repaired to Kensington. He was accompanied or followed by several privy counsellors of the same party; and by their impulse a sudden revulsion took place in the counsels of government. Troops were ordered to march to the metropolis; ten battalions were recalled from Flanders; an embargo was laid on the ports; a fleet sent to sea under the command of the earl of Berkeley, and strong measures adopted to maintain the public tranquillity in every part of the kingdom.

A request was also sent to the States to guarantee the Protestant succession, and an express despatched to the elector of Hanover, entreating him to repair without delay to Holland, where a fleet would be ready to convey him to England, should it please God to call the queen to his mercy!

The queen having relapsed into a lethargy, and the physicians despairing of her life, the heralds at arms, and a troop of the life guards, were then summoned on duty; and by these and other judicious exertions the death of the sovereign, which happened at seven in the morning of the first of August, was instantly followed by the proclamation of the elector of Hanover as king, under the title of George I. Thus, by the blessing of divine Providence, the Protestant succession was secured.*

* Boyer's Queen Anne; Political State; Continuation of Rapin; Swift's Memoirs relating to the Change of the Queen's Ministry; and Inquiry into the behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry; Letters of Charles Ford and Erasmus Lewis to Dr. Swift; Bolingbroke's Correspondence; Macpherson's Stuart and Hanover Papers, *passim*; Mémoires de Berwick and Torcy.

[See also Appendix, note J.]

This aspect of unanimity confounded all the enemies to the Protestant succession. The king of France, however inclined to favour the restoration of the Stuart line, was too prudent to resist the torrent of the national will; the pretender, bereft of assistance abroad, and deriving no aid from his dismayed friends at home, remained a passive witness of his own defeat, and the elevation of his rival.

From the increasing divisions between the two ministers, and the violence of their respective adherents, a change in the cabinet had been long anticipated. It was natural, therefore, that Marlborough should be anxious to be present at the expected crisis; and he was strongly exhorted by his friends in England to accelerate his return. Oppressed by the weight of age and increasing infirmities, he waited only till the parliament was prorogued to commence his journey, and declared his resolution to brave again the persecutions he had already endured, for the gratification of revisiting his native land.

He gave notice of his design to Prince Eugene, and imparted it to his friends in England. As early as April his wife, in her extensive correspondence announced, with heartfelt satisfaction, that they should speedily return to their country, declaring with a spirit of national enthusiasm, that they would rather die in a cottage in England, than reside in a palace abroad.

To the elector he thus announced his purpose, in a letter to Robethon, dated June 18. After expressing his concern for the death of the electress, he adds, "I have been wishing some time to hear how you parted with Mr. Harley, and whether there was any hope of the electoral prince going into England, which, I find, all the considerable men of both sides so earnestly desired, that they express a great deal of trouble at the disappointment. This is what my correspondents write the 29th of May; and one thing more, which I think is diverting, that Mr. Auditor Harley gives into these complaints, and said, that if the electoral prince had immediately followed the demanding of the writ, it had, by this time, put an end to the Jacobite ministers and party. How sincere this is in my lord treasurer's brother, I believe you may be able to judge of as well as any body, by what he has written to your court; but this artifice, and a great many

others of the same kind, show that he thinks it of use to continue deluding people with such tricks, and pretending that he is for the succession in the house of Hanover; though, since he had the power, he never went one step that was not directly against it. Pray be pleased to take an opportunity of acquainting his electoral highness that my best friends think my being in England may be of much more use to the service than my continuing abroad, upon which I design to return as soon as the parliament is up; and being very desirous of receiving the elector's commands, I have already written to M. Bothmar to meet me at Mordick, which may easily be done without being known to any body. I shall not leave this place till the beginning of the next month."

He accordingly took his departure from Antwerp, and repaired to Ostend for the purpose of embarking. While he was detained by contrary winds, the duchess imparted to her correspondent, Mrs. Clayton*, an interesting account of his journey.

"*Ostend, July* 30. 1714. — I am sure my dear friend will be glad to hear that we are come well to this place, where we wait for a fair wind, and, in the meantime, are in a very clean house, and have every thing good but water. 'Tis not to be told, in this letter, the respect and affection shown to the Duke of Marlborough in every place where he goes, which always makes me remember our governors in the manner that is natural to do; and, upon this journey, one thing has happened that was surprising and very pretty. The Duke of Marlborough contrived it so as to avoid going into the great towns as much as he could, and for that reason went a little out of the way not to go through Ghent; but the chief magistrates hearing where he was to pass, met him upon the road, and had prepared a very handsome breakfast for all that was with us in a little village, where one of their ladies stayed to do the honours; and there was in the company a considerable churchman that was lame, and had not been out of his room in a great while, but would give himself

* Mrs. Clayton was wife of Robert Clayton, Esq., who held an official situation in the treasury, and was one of the managers of the Duke's estates during his absence. After the accession of George I., the duchess procured for her friend, through the influence of Baron Bothmar, the place of woman of the bedchamber to the princess of Wales. In this situation she conciliated the favour of her royal mistress, and obtained great influence in the succeeding reign. Her husband was created Lord Sundon, and she became the great favourite of Queen Caroline. — *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, passim.

this trouble. This is to show you how the Roman Catholics in these countries love those that have served them well. Among the governors of that town there were a great many officers that came out with them a-foot; and I was so much surprised and touched at their kindness, that I could not speak to the officers without a good deal of concern, saying I was sorry for what they did, fearing it might hurt them; to which they replied very politicly or ignorantly, I don't know which, sure it was not possible for them to suffer for having done their duty. The next day Mr. Sutton met with us, with other officers, and did a great many civilities in bringing wine and very good fruit; but I was not so much surprised at that, because he is so well with the ministers that he may do what he pleases. The Duke of Marlborough is determined to stay here till he has a very fair wind and good weather, and not to be at London till three or four days after he lands at Dover, because we have so many horses and servants, that we can't travel fast. I long to embrace my dear Mrs. Clayton, and I hope I shall never part from her again for any long time, though I have as ill an opinion of public affairs as ever, but I would fain end my life in England with my friends if I can, and must submit to popery or any thing that cannot be helped. My humble service to Mr. Clayton, and to every body that you think cares to hear of me."

Meanwhile the friends of the illustrious exile in England made preparations for his reception; and his approaching arrival was hailed by the Whigs, and all who were favourable to the house of Hanover, as the consummation of their hopes, while the Jacobites contemplated his coming with dismay.

The political conduct of Marlborough during his abode on the continent, and the motives for his return to England being thus clearly ascertained, it may seem unnecessary to vindicate him from various aspersions, which, although inconsistent with each other, have been cast on his memory, and repeatedly asserted, until they have assumed the colour of truth. Thus he has been accused of caballing, at the same time, with Oxford and Bolingbroke; and the old slander has been revived, of his treasonable correspondence with the Stuart line. That he was not inclined to favour the pretender is evident, from the violence with which he was assailed by the Jacobites, who considered him as the bitterest enemy of their cause. One of their principal leaders, alluding to the supposed reconciliation between him and Bolingbroke, candidly allows that, "In that event, it is more than probable, that all the Lord Bolingbroke's designs for the king (the pretender), would have been dropped, and *other*

schemes laid down and pursued." He likewise mentions a report that the duke refused a loan of 100,000*l.*, which the pretender demanded as the pledge of his fidelity.*

A single paragraph, in a secret letter from Prior to Bolingbroke, will sufficiently disprove the malicious but unfounded rumour, that he was acting, in concurrence with France and the pretender, to overturn the settlement of the succession. "*Aug.* 7. 1714. — M. de Torcy has very severe, and, I fear, very exact accounts of us; *we are all frightened out of our wits*, upon the Duke of Marlborough's going to England."† In regard to his cabals with Bolingbroke, which seem to be too generally credited, we may contradict the accusation on the indeniable testimony of the secretary himself. In a letter to Lord Strafford, dated July 14., he observes: "Lord Marlborough's people give out that he is coming over, and I take it for granted he is so; whether on account of the ill figure he makes on the continent, or the good one he hopes to make at home, I shall not determine. But I have reason to think that some people‡, who would rather move heaven and earth than part with their power, or make a right use of it, have lately made overtures to him, and have entered into some degree of concert with his creatures. My dear lord, the queen's affairs are in a deplorable condition." In the bitterness of his anger, Bolingbroke also preferred an accusation to the queen against the treasurer, for his cabals with the Duke of Marlborough, and adduced this supposed intercourse as a motive for depriving him of the white staff.

The tale of his cabals with Oxford rests on no firmer foundation. We have already stated that he was indebted to Oxford for his passport. This transaction, however, did not produce the smallest degree of reconciliation, for the correspondence of Marlborough evidently proves his rooted aversion to the treasurer; and the latter, in a conversation with Lord Cowper in 1712, cast the most injurious reflections on the disgraced general, accusing him of encouraging the emperor to give an archduchess to the pretender, and boasting that he had intercepted several letters to him from the dukes of Berwick and Orleans, which proved a treasonable

* Lockhart's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 461.
† Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 579.
‡ Meaning Lord Oxford.

correspondence with the Stuarts. A partial renewal of their intercourse, however, occurred in the latter end of 1713, when Oxford announced to the Duke, in a friendly letter, the royal warrant for 10,000*l.* to carry on the works of Blenheim. This favour the duchess justly attributes to the indisposition of the queen, which induced the treasurer to conciliate the Duke, with the hope that if the elector of Hanover should succeed, he might derive some benefit from his interposition. But this gleam of returning harmony soon disappeared; and the treasurer laboured during the mission of his relative, Mr. Harley, to the court of Hanover, to alienate the elector from the duke, by exciting suspicions of his fidelity, and exaggerating his intercourse with the dethroned family. From this period to the death of Anne, we not only find no proofs of reconciliation, but in some mysterious letters from the duchess to Mrs. Clayton we perceive traces of the inveterate enmity which both she and her husband fostered against the two ministers, particularly against Oxford, till the moment of their embarkation. A few extracts will suffice to show the style of the rest.*

"*Antwerp, Sept.* 13., o. s., 1713. — I don't know what has been the occasion of the report of our coming to England, where I need not say I should be very glad to be, and particularly to enjoy your agreeable conversation, but I can see no prospect; for though I think nobody is more reasonable, and judges better in most things than you, I can't find any ground to flatter myself than young 97† will not be the same as the old, and for one reason or another will be governed by 11's friends, 12 and 17; and to hope only from chance, or that many will oppose 11 that will not oppose 17 and 36, is a very sandy foundation, and what will fail you at the last; though I believe the men of estates, and that have an interest in the security of their country, joined together, might make a good struggle in our defence, if they could be made sensible of the ruin that is coming upon us. But after so many excellent papers writ to no purpose, which all people must know is the truth, as that nothing was ever so wicked and scandalous as the present ministry; how can one imagine

* Contrary to my usual custom, I have left the ciphers in the text without explanation, because I found no key, and may possibly in some instances be mistaken. I believe, however, the following explanation is correct: — 7, the queen; 8, the Electress Sophia; 9, electoral prince; 11, the pretender; 12, the pope; 17, Lord Oxford; 18, Lord Bolingbroke; 19, Lord Chancellor Harcourt; 36, Lady Masham; 59, England; 88, the Tories; 89, the Whigs; 140, the king of France:

† The new parliament.

any thing can change the majority when all I have mentioned has had no effect! I think 'tis much more probable that the best of 88 should be brought into the interest of 11, than that they should join to save their liberties with 89; and, not to tire you with my arguments, in short I think the whole world is given up to France; and I have it from too good hands, that as soon as the emperor can be forced into a peace, the prince of Wales is to come into England; and 'tis said in France that 7 will consent to it. Perhaps she is not yet acquainted with that part of it. But, however, when the things are prepared for it, there can be no great difficulty in that, nor no great matter whether 7 likes it or not. Perhaps the king of France may be strong enough to place him upon the throne without the consent of England; but if they take another way to do it, by parliament, to be sure there will be acts passed to quiet people, and to assure them that all things shall remain as they are; and is it more ridiculous to believe we shall be safe under the power of the king of France, and a Roman Catholic prince, to govern under him, than what the majority of England have already done?"

"I have so few pleasures in this world* that I hope my dear friend will indulge me in one of my greatest, which is writing to you, though I have wrote to you three several ways lately, and have none of yours since my last. I can't help wishing for the next post more than ordinary, because I think it will bring an account of the House of Commons; and if they are as sensible of the ruin that threatens as the Lords seem to be, I hope both together will think of some way to save us; 17 and 7 have wrote to 8 and 9† only to cheat; and one thing is very foolish, that 17 has not dated the letter, who is so formal in those things, that he would not fail that part if he wrote only into his own street to a tradesman. But I suppose the reason of it is, that he would have it in his power, if these letters should be ever shown to his prejudice, to say that they were wrote in some year when he had not professed things so contrary to 11; and I am so very sure that 7, 36, 17, 18, 19, 20‡, and 110‡, and some others, are in that service, that I can't help suspecting sometimes, that there is no real difference between any of these figures, but that they think they serve some end by pretending to dislike one another. And 'tis to be apprehended that many may act contrary to reason, in hopes of being preferred to 17's post when 46§ and 47§ are gone, which I imagine is the language of 7 to such as they would make use of for a present turn. I was never much concerned for the disappointment of the honest

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* This letter is without date, but was probably written towards the end of April, 1714, because she alludes to the answer given by the queen, on the 8th–23d of April, to an address from the Lords, to issue a proclamation for seizing the person of the pretender.

† The remark of the duchess is perfectly correct, for the letters of Oxford to the electoral family are without date.

‡ Possibly the duke of Ormond and Mr. Bromley.

§ Probably the Lords and Commons: meaning when parliament is prorogued.

people, concerning the words changed in the address for the proclamation, if the prince of Wales landed; and by a letter I had lately, I am yet more confirmed that I was in the right. For it appears to me, that the great struggle the ministers made to have that matter left to her majesty's own time, and then the queen answering that she did not think it necessary, must needs help to convince men, that can yet be in doubt of the mysterious designs, which is certainly the chief thing; for when the prince does really land, whatever the proclamations are of either side, those that conquer will do as they please; and, therefore, I think the first thing is, to make people see their danger all the ways that can be imagined."

"*June* 24., N. S., *Saturday.* — Since my last to my dear Mrs. Clayton, I have received your kind letter of the first of this month, and, though I never doubt of any thing you write, I only fear that what relates to the queen will not come time enough to be of any service to 59. I have given you my opinion in former letters as to 89 and 59, and all I have to add upon that subject is, that I think there could be no doubt of 7 and 140 doing every thing that was wicked in that matter, and mischievous to 59. But that I suppose must be as well seen by those that desired 9 as by me; and for those 'tis reasonable to suppose that they thought they should have got 47 and 46 to be of 9's side, or else I don't see what advantage it could be of, had they obtained what was desired. Though by all that has yet appeared, the best argument that ever I could find for 9's waiting upon England* was the prodigious fright 7 and 140 were in upon that subject; and whatever part 17 has had in that matter, or whatever his brother may say to divide, and to support himself against the ambition of 18, I am as sure that 17 is engaged to 11, and was so before 18 had any power, as I am of any thing that is past. And if 18 does get the better of 17, 'tis only because his way of serving 11 is more liked than 17, which is very natural for 11, 12, and all their entire friends to be fond of. But it will be only in the power of 36 to determine that matter between 17 and 18, and all the concern I have in it is, to have that figure fall first that is most likely to serve 59, by it, being very sure, as long as they work together, it will be for the interest of 11; and I am apt to think that if 17 were discarded, it would be of more service every way than to have 18 disappointed."

No farther evidence can surely be required to prove that, before his departure for the continent, Marlborough had entered into no compromise either with Oxford or Bolingbroke; and that he returned with a resolution to support that cause, for which he had fought and conquered, and for which he had braved persecution and doomed himself to a voluntary exile.

* Journey of the electoral prince to England.

Chap. CXIII.—Restoration of the Duke.—1714, 1715.

Labouring under the deepest anxiety at the lowering aspect of public affairs, Marlborough remained several days at Ostend. At length a change of wind enabled him to take his departure for his native shore. On approaching the coast near Dover, in the evening of the first of August, the vessel was boarded by a messenger from Sir Thomas Frankland, postmaster-general, who conveyed the important tidings of the queen's decease, and the quiet accession* of the new sovereign. The feelings of the exiled chief may easily be conceived. Providence appeared to bless his return to the bosom of his friends and family. He no longer had to encounter unmerited persecution, no longer to bear the frowns of an offended sovereign, or to remain exposed to the calumnies and vengeance of party. He had reason to expect a return of sentiment in his misguided countrymen; and from the sovereign who was called to the throne, he anticipated the favours and distinction which its preserver was entitled to claim.

The welcome which he experienced on his entrance into the harbour was calculated to give strength to these grateful feelings. On the approach of the vessel, the thunder of artillery resounded from the platform; and as he landed, he was hailed with the shouts of exulting crowds. He was received by the mayor and jurats in all their formalities; and afterwards repaired to the hospitable mansion of his devoted friend, Sir Henry Furnese from whence he had taken his departure for his voluntary exile.

On the following day he proceeded towards the capital, and passed the night at Sittingbourne. On the road, the elevated hopes he had conceived were damped by the communications of Colonel Graham, one of his former aides-de-camp, who imparted to him the list of lords justices; from

* We have ventured, in this account, to follow implicitly the narrative of the duchess, who must have been best acquainted with the circumstances attending their return. Boyer and other writers assert that they had a stormy passage, and were not apprised of the news of the queen's decease till the day following their arrival at Dover.

which, to his mortification, he found his own name, and that of Lord Sunderland, excluded.

He bore this unexpected slight with dignified calmness, and continued his journey. He purposed to enter the metropolis with his usual privacy; but the zeal of his friends overcame his caution, and he consented to bear a part in the cavalcade prepared for his reception. On his approach to the suburbs, he was met by Sir Charles Cox, member for Southwark, at the head of 200 gentlemen on horseback; and as he advanced, the procession was joined by his family and friends, in a long train of carriages. With this escort he passed through the city, preceded by a volunteer company of the city grenadiers, and hailed with loud acclamations of "Long live King George! Long live the Duke of Marlborough!"

At Temple Bar his carriage broke down, but without producing any serious injury; and he rode in another coach to his house in Pall Mall, where the grenadiers took their leave by firing a volley. The remainder of the evening was spent in receiving the congratulations of his family and friends. The ensuing morning, the 5th of August, he was visited by most of the foreign ministers, and many of the nobility, gentry, and officers of the army; and having been sworn of the privy council, by the lords justices, he appeared in the House of Lords, which then first met for the transaction of business. He took the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and, after the speech delivered by the lords justices, gave his approbation to the royal address passed on the occasion.

The parliament being prorogued till the 12th, he did not remain in town to take any farther share in public business, but withdrew to his mansion of Holywell House, with sentiments of chagrin and disappointment at the slight he had experienced in being excluded from the regency.

His dignified retirement awakened the Hanoverian agents to a sense of their neglect. He was accordingly visited by Bothmar and his colleagues, who laboured to assuage his chagrin by their apologies, and ascribed the oversight to inadvertency, or to his absence from England. He accepted their excuses; but, at the instance of the duchess, adopted a resolution to hold no official situation under the new government. The fact is thus stated in her own words: "I begged

of the Duke of Marlborough, upon my knees, that he would never accept of any employment. I said every body that liked the revolution and the security of the law had a great esteem for him; that he had a greater fortune than he wanted; and that a man who had had such success, with such an estate, would be of more use to any court than they could be of to him: that I would live civilly with them, if they were so to me, but would never put it into the power of any king to use me ill. He was entirely of this opinion, and determined to quit all, and serve them only when he could act honestly, and do his country service at the same time. Any extraordinary pay as general, he quitted at first, there being an end of the war; so that he had only the empty name of it. And his other preferments were, master of the ordnance, and his regiment of guards, for which he had only the settled allowances; and what he resolved to quit was of no consideration to him, added to his estate."

Having passed a few days at Holywell, he proceeded to Windsor Lodge, on his way to Bath, for the purpose of embracing his beloved daughter, Lady Sunderland, who was seriously indisposed. Here he remained, till the period when George I. was expected in England, to take possession of his new sovereignty.

The interval between the death of Anne and the departure of the king from Hanover was spent by all parties in vain conjectures, and with mingled hope and anxiety. The conduct of the new sovereign was well calculated to work on the feelings of all who aspired to office and distinction, and to give the two rival parties an equal interest in the maintenance of tranquillity. His arrival at the Hague disclosed his real views; for the Whigs were gratified to find their zeal and attachment rewarded with his full confidence and favour. But although his decision evinced his predilection for the great champions of civil liberty, he displayed a jealousy of those chiefs, who, under the name of the Junta, had directed the operations of the party, by confiding the powers of government to Lord Townshend, who had hitherto acted in a subordinate sphere.

Before his arrival, that nobleman received the seals, which had been taken from Lord Bolingbroke, and was intrusted with the arrangement of a new administration. On the 17th,

he took possession of his office, and on the 18th the king gratified his expectant subjects, by landing at Greenwich, in company with the electoral prince. Marlborough hastened from Bath, to join the vast concourse, who crowded to greet his arrival, and was received with peculiar marks of attention and cordiality. He likewise experienced the most flattering distinction from the heir-apparent, who was proud to recognise the illustrious hero, under whose banner he had reaped the first fruits of glory, at the battle of Oudenard. The duke attended the king on his solemn entry into the metropolis, and shared with his sovereign the acclamations of the populace.

While the Whigs were flattered with peculiar marks of the royal attention, the leading members of the late administration were treated with equal neglect and scorn. The earl of Oxford was barely admitted to kiss the hand of his new master, but without the slightest notice; the duke of Ormond, who was hastening to Greenwich with a splendid retinue, was forbidden to appear in the royal presence; and Lord Harcourt, who, as chancellor, had prepared the patent for the prince of Wales, was contemptuously dismissed.

The arrival of the king was followed by the choice of a new administration, which had been previously arranged by Lord Townshend, in conjunction with his brother-in-law, Mr. Walpole, who, in like manner, was called from a subordinate character to the management of the House of Commons, and the office of paymaster of the forces. General Stanhope was nominated the other secretary of state; Lord Cowper, chancellor; Lord Wharton, who was raised to the dignity of marquess, privy seal; the duke of Shrewsbury was retained in his post of lord chamberlain; the duke of Somerset constituted master of the horse; and the duke of Devonshire lord high steward. The admiralty and treasury were both put in commission; the first under the earl of Orford, and the last under Lord Halifax, who was created an earl, honoured with the garter, and permitted to resign, in favour of his nephew, the lucrative post of auditor of the exchequer, which was incompatible with his new office. The lord-lieutenancy of Ireland was conferred on Lord Sunderland. The posts of government were successively filled by the same party; and the only Tory admitted to a share of

power was Nottingham, who, in reward for his late alliance with the Whigs, was restored to his former situation of president of the council.

Few who are accustomed to power are willing to forego its enjoyment; and, therefore, we are not surprised to find Marlborough forgetting his late resolution, and yielding to the persuasions of Sunderland and his other friends, in resuming his former offices of captain-general and master of the ordnance. He was also gratified by the appointment of his sons-in-law, Lord Godolphin to the post of cofferer of the household, and the earl of Bridgewater to that of lord chamberlain to the prince's household. The duke of Montagu, another son-in-law, was rewarded with a regiment, and a company in the first regiment of guards; and the duchess, his daughter, was soon afterwards appointed lady of the bedchamber to the princess of Wales.

But although our great commander was thus distinguished with honours and emoluments, he was reduced to the shadow of his former authority; for he was admitted to little share in the government of the state, and confined to the routine of his official stations. He deeply felt also the total exclusion of the moderate Tories, with whom he had been once identified in principle, and whose zeal and services in support of the Protestant succession he duly appreciated. Nor was he less chagrined at the exclusion of his son-in-law, Lord Sunderland, from the primary departments of state, and his appointment to the viceroyalty of Ireland, which was considered as a species of honourable banishment.

The same tranquillity which had marked the change of sovereigns in England, was experienced in Scotland and Ireland; and in both countries the offices of government were transferred to the favoured party. The seals of secretary of state for Scotland were taken from the earl of Mar, and given to the duke of Montrose, who had signalised his zeal in favour of the Whigs; and the office of commander-in-chief was vested in the duke of Argyle, who had successfully combated the intrigues of Bolingbroke. In Ireland, Sir Constantine Phipps and the archbishop of Armagh were removed from the posts of lords justices, and replaced by friends to the Protestant interest; a new privy council was formed, and the high office of chancellor was consigned to Alan Brodrick, one of

the ablest and most honourable of the Whig party, who was intrusted with the chief authority of government.*

The parliament was dissolved as soon as the arrangements of administration were matured; and the popular sentiment reverting from the Tories to the Whigs, gave them an entire ascendency in the new elections. The remainder of the autumn and winter having been judiciously employed in strengthening the government at home, and in endeavouring to renew the political system abroad, the legislature was called to resume its functions on the 17th of March, 1715. The Whigs raised Mr. Spencer Compton to the speaker's chair; and the proceedings were opened on the 21st with a speech from the throne, adapted to the circumstances of the times, and breathing the sentiments of the Whigs.

After approving the zeal which all classes had manifested in defence of the Protestant succession, the king stated that many essential conditions of the late peace were not duly performed, and urged the necessity of defensive alliances to ensure its execution. He observed, that the pretender boasted of the assistance which he expected from his partisans in England, that he was still permitted to reside in Lorraine, that the trade of the nation was injured, and the public debts increased. He concluded with professing his resolution to make the established constitution, in church and state, the rule of his government, and to devote the chief care of his life to the happiness, ease, and prosperity of his people.

The addresses prepared by the Whigs were vigorously opposed by the members and favourers of the late administration, who considered the style of the speech as indicative of an attack against themselves; but their opposition only roused the spirit of the ruling party. Both houses testified the most heartfelt gratitude to Providence, for having raised his majesty to the throne at this critical conjuncture. Both expressed hopes that, assisted by the zeal of parliament, he would recover the reputation of the kingdom in foreign parts, and declared that they would convince the world by their actions, that the loss of honour was not to be imputed to the nation in general. Both trusted in his majesty's wisdom and

* He was soon afterwards created Baron Brodrick, and is better known under his subsequent title of Viscount Middleton. — *See Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, passim.

energy to secure the fulfilment of the treaties, to alleviate their debts, to preserve public credit, and restore trade. But the address of the Commons was peculiarly energetic: they professed that no care on their part should be wanting to inquire into the cause of the late fatal miscarriages, and observed, "We are sensibly touched, not only with the disappointment, but the reproach brought upon the nation, by the unsuitable conclusion of a war, which was carried on at so vast an expense, and was attended with such unparalleled successes; but as that dishonour cannot in justice be imputed to the whole nation, so we firmly hope and believe, that through your majesty's great wisdom, and the faithful endeavours of your Commons, the reputation of your kingdoms will in due time be vindicated and restored."

In a subsequent part of the address the Commons evinced a determination not to overlook the dishonourable conduct of the late administration, adding, "It is with just resentment we observe that the pretender still lives in Lorraine, and that he has the presumption, by declarations from thence, to stir up your majesty's subjects to rebellion. But that which raises the utmost indignation of your Commons is, that it appears therein that his hopes were built upon the measures that had been taken for some time past in Great Britain. It shall be our business to trace out those measures, whereon he places his hopes, and to bring the authors of them to condign punishment."

Marlborough was too deeply affected with the degradation of the national honour, and the danger to which the liberties and constitution of England had been exposed, by the conduct of the late ministers, not to approve the resolution expressed in this address, to call them to account. Accordingly, both himself and his adherents joined in the impeachments of Oxford and Bolingbroke, who were the principal authors of the late dishonourable peace, and the no less dishonourable measures adopted in its progress.

Bolingbroke and Ormond fled from the justice of their country; and having evinced their guilt, by publicly entering into the service of the pretender, were outlawed and attainted. Oxford more manfully awaited his fate, and, in consequence of a vote of impeachment, was committed to the Tower. The particulars of this celebrated process belong

to the province of the national historian, and, therefore, we shall merely observe that the Duke of Marlborough was present in the House of Peers, at the different decisions passed on this occasion, and gave his vote in support of the heads of accusation, though he took no share in the debates.

We shall now, therefore, confine ourselves principally to those events and circumstances in which Marlborough was personally or officially concerned. As captain-general, he had speedily an occasion to employ his judicious and well-timed interference.

On the 24th of May, 1715, a clause was proposed in the House of Peers, to be inserted in the bill for the regulation of the land forces, then under discussion, the purport of which was, to confine the regiments to their stations in every part of the British dominions. It was warmly supported by the duke of Buckingham, Lord Trevor, Lord North, and Grey, and by the bishop of Rochester, all of whom were friendly to the pretender's interest. The duke of Marlborough, on the other hand, exposed, with great warmth and ability, the insidiousness and impolicy of this restriction, in case of an invasion or insurrection. He enlarged on the dangers which would ensue, should the foreign invaders or the insurgents be superior in number to the troops quartered on any particular spot, while others remained useless in distant and peaceable stations; and justly observed, "his majesty having trusted his royal person and family entirely into the hands of the nation, and, at the opening of the session told the parliament that *what they should judge necessary for their safety, he should think sufficient for his own, we cannot do less for his majesty* than to leave to his great wisdom and direction, the disposal of the few troops that are kept on foot." His opinion, strengthened by the weight of long experience and military skill, prevailed with the House, and the clause was rejected without a division.

He combated also, with no less firmness than ability, another clause, which, under the semblance of national predilection, deeply affected the honour of the country, and the interest of the army. A motion being made to exclude all foreign officers from the British service, Marlborough spoke with peculiar energy against so impolitic a measure. "Thus to cashier," he exclaimed, "officers, particularly French re-

fugees, whose intrepidity and skill I have often experienced, many of whom have served during twenty-five years with disinterested zeal and unblemished fidelity, would be the height of ingratitude, and an act of injustice, unparalleled even among the most barbarous nations." His arguments had their due effect, and he had again the satisfaction to find his opinion approved and sanctioned. But while he thus exerted his patriotic efforts for the welfare of the army, he was exposed to a malicious imputation, no less frivolous in itself than unjustly grounded.

The accession of a foreign sovereign, unacquainted with our language and manners, and surrounded with crowds of needy adherents, was likely to call forth those popular prejudices which form a leading feature in the character of the British nation. In such circumstances, trifling grievances, which would otherwise pass unnoticed, or be speedily remedied, contributed to excite the most serious dissatisfaction; and the public feeling was strikingly manifested on the king's birthday, and on the anniversary of the Restoration, when crowds of all descriptions assembled in the streets.

Instigated by Jacobite or disaffected leaders, the giddy populace tumultuously collected in different parts of the town, shouting, "Ormond and high church for ever! Down with the Hanover rats!" Their example readily spread to the guards, who were offended by the frauds of the contractors for furnishing their clothing, which was defective both in quantity and quality. Some threw their shirts into the gardens of St. James's Palace and of Marlborough House; and a detachment of the very regiment of which he was colonel, in their way to the Tower, publicly exposed their coarse and scanty garments, exclaiming, "These are Hanover shirts!" The captain-general felt the danger of alienating the force, which was intrusted with the duty of defending the royal person, and preserving the tranquillity of the capital. The clothing having been examined, and the complaints of the soldiers appearing justly founded, he instantly directed the obnoxious shirts to be burnt, and ordered a double supply, both of shirts and jackets, of superior quality to be prepared.

On the 2d of June he reviewed his own regiment of guards; and, at the close of the evolutions, thus addressed them:—

"Gentlemen; I am much concerned to find your complaints so just, about the ill state of your clothes. I take this opportunity to tell you, that I am wholly innocent of this grievance; and, depend upon it, no application shall be wanting on my part, to trace out the measures that have been taken, to abuse you and me. I am resolved nothing shall divert me from demanding forthwith satisfaction, (wherever it may happen to fall,) and shall think nothing too much on my part, for your great services. I have ordered you a new set of clothing, such as will be every way becoming his majesty's first regiment of foot-guards. I desire you will return these, and take your old, till such time as the new can be completed, which, I give you my word, shall be as soon as possible. I have had the honour to serve with some of you a great many campaigns, and believe you will do me the justice to tell the world, that I never willingly wronged any of you; and if I can be serviceable to any (the least) of you, you may readily command it, and I shall be glad of any opportunity for that purpose. I hope I shall now leave you good subjects to the best of kings, and every way entirely satisfied."

This address, seconded by a liberal donation of beer, obliterated the memory of all grievances; and the troops hastened to testify their returning sense of duty, by uniting in their acclamations the names of George I., and the Duke of Marlborough.

We quit incidents, which, though trifling, might have been attended with the most serious consequences, to turn our view to events more suited to the fame and character of our illustrious hero.

CHAP. CXIV.—REBELLION OF SCOTLAND.—1715, 1716.

THE ill effects derived from the late dishonourable peace were still more deeply felt by England in its domestic, than in its foreign relations. The most prominent was, the residence of the pretender in Lorraine, where he could avail himself of the connivance, if not the assistance of the king of France, and excite the flame of insurrection among his adherents in the British dominions, as well as among the parties disaffected to the new government.

The exclusion of the Tories from the principal offices of state, and the severity, however just, which was exercised towards the members of the late administration, created great discontents, which were exaggerated by the reports of Jacobite agents and spies; and the most sanguine hopes were entertained of overturning the new order of succession.

These hopes were not overlooked at the court of Versailles. Notwithstanding all his solemn promises, and the perils from which he had almost miraculously escaped, Louis was too much interested in fomenting civil convulsions in the territories of his most dangerous neighbour, not to connive at the designs of the pretender. He supplied him secretly with sums of money, and permitted him to prepare a small armament, in the port of Havre de Grace, which was equipped under a feigned name. Bolingbroke and Ormond, corresponding with the malcontents in England, gave spirit and energy to the hitherto inert mass; and a simultaneous rising was planned in different counties. But it was in Scotland, were the germ of discontent most rapidly sprung into maturity, and where the adherents of the Stuarts waited only for the signal, to raise the standard of insurrection.

The prime agent in the first overt act was the celebrated earl of Mar. At the death of queen Anne, this nobleman made great professions of loyalty to the new sovereign, and took the usual oaths of allegiance; but being dissatisfied with his exclusion from all share in the administration of affairs, he embarked on the 8th of August at Gravesend, with Major-general Hamilton and Colonel Hay, on board of a collier; and, after landing at Newcastle, sailed in another vessel to Elie, in Fifeshire. Having collected in the neighbouring districts a few hundred followers, and being joined by several noblemen and lairds, he raised the standard of rebellion at Brae-Mar; and, on the 6th of September, proclaimed James III. of England, and eighth of Scotland, at Castleton. The Scottish clans flocking to his quarters, his desultory forces, before the end of the month, amounted to 10,000 men.

At the same time, a regular conspiracy was organised in various parts of England, which was fomented by many persons of eminence and distinction, among whom we particularly notice Sir William Windham, whose influence was unbounded in the western counties. The impulse was already given, and a vast body of malcontents waited only for the appearance of the duke of Ormond, to imitate the example of their brethren beyond the Tweed.

In the northern districts, the insurgents were, however, too impatient to remain tranquil till the conspiracy broke

forth in the south; for the earl of Derwentwater and Colonel Forster assembled a force, and proclaimed the pretender in Warkworth, Morpeth, and Alnwick. But they speedily felt the effects of their precipitation, and were compelled to retire to Hexham.

On the first intelligence of the pretender's plan for the invasion of the British dominions, the ministry acted with unusual vigour and alacrity, and the Duke of Marlborough participated in their zeal. Horace Walpole was sent to join with General Cadogan, then minister at the Hague, in pressing the States to ratify the barrier treaty, and supply the contingent of 6000 men, stipulated in the article for the guarantee of the Protestant succession. This application was successful; and Marlborough impatiently expected the disembarkation of Cadogan, with the promised succours, as the means of extinguishing the flames of rebellion.

The king having declared to parliament, that a rebellion was begun at home, and an invasion apprehended from abroad, both houses presented addresses, full of loyalty and zeal, and expressed a resolution to support with vigour his majesty's government against all foreign and domestic enemies. In conformity with these declarations, the parliament granted liberal supplies, suspended the habeas corpus act, empowered the king to secure suspected persons, and offered a reward of 100,000*l.* for seizing the pretender, alive or dead. They voted also an augmentation of the sea and land forces, and established all necessary regulations for maintaining internal tranquillity, and resisting foreign invasion.

The ministers acted with no less vigour and decision; the spirit of loyalty manifested by the parliament spread over the nation, and the projected insurrection was prevented. Persons of all ranks and distinctions were secured; and among these we cannot omit to notice Sir William Windham, whose arrest was accompanied with peculiar circumstances. The proposal for his apprehension, with evident proofs of his guilt, being laid before the cabinet council, his father-in-law, the duke of Somerset, offered to become responsible for his conduct; but when his offers were rejected, and his son-in-law was committed to the Tower, the high-spirited peer gave vent to his chagrin, in such indignant terms, that he was removed from the office of master of the

horse. To this incident Marlborough alludes in two mysterious notes to the duchess, indicating his perfect approbation of the measure, as well as his unabated opposition to the projects of the pretender.

"*Monday*, 12 *o'clock*. — I have kept the bearer, in hopes that we might have heard from the duke of Argyle; but there is a letter come from Berwick, which says the rebels are marching towards Northumberland. If that be true, it must be that the duke of Argyle has not followed them.

"I hope in God things will turn more to our advantage than yours of last night apprehended. There will be sent an express this afternoon to Cadogan, for the hastening the Dutch troops; but by what he writes to me, I fear he will not be able to embark them till this day se'nnight.

"I hope 5* will some time this day carry the message for dismissing 11 (the duke of Somerset), which at last was with difficulty resolved.

* * * * * *

"As Mr. Cadogan is in hopes of signing the barrier treaty this week, I have been very pressing with him, that he should come in person with the Dutch troops, which will be a very great use to me, for he will be, upon all occasions, very useful."

"*Tuesday night*. — I find by yours of last night that you are desirous not to be here till Thursday. I am sure I shall always prefer your satisfaction before my own, so that I reckon you will not be here till Thursday. In the mean time, be easy in your mind, for our cause is so good, that Providence can't but be of our side. The business of 11 (the duke of Somerset) was this morning performed, so that the trouble of that matter is now at an end."

In adverting to the causes which gave energy and support to the new government, we cannot omit the elevation of Mr. Walpole to the head of the treasury, which had been recently vacated by the death of Lord Halifax, and the resignation of the earl of Carlisle, who found himself unequal to the management of so responsible an office, in this perilous crisis. This appointment was peculiarly grateful to Marlborough; for he had himself been the earliest patron of Walpole, whose fidelity, discretion, and talents for business he had long experienced. The confidence inspired by the principles and financial ability of the new minister produced the most gratifying effect. Every loyal member of the community contributed to supply the treasury with voluntary loans, and among those who gave such proofs of

* Probably one of the secretaries of state, or perhaps the lord chamberlain.

public spirit we distinguish the Duke of Marlborough, who, in this pressing exigence, raised on his own private credit, a considerable sum of money, in the space of a few hours.* We are happy, in this instance, to combine the names of Marlborough and Walpole, for their eminent services in support of a government, the overthrow of which would have introduced popery and arbitrary power.

Meanwhile the most vigorous and judicious arrangements were planned by government, for raising the civil force in every part of the country; and the commander-in-chief made a regular distribution of the troops who were to act against the rebels. General Wightman, who commanded in the north, collected a small body of troops, and posted himself at Stirling Castle, to check the advance of the insurgents towards the south. Here he was ordered to remain, till he was joined by the duke of Argyle, who was intrusted with the direction of the whole military force in Scotland, and waited only for reinforcements to take the field. General Carpenter was despatched to Northumberland, with a body of horse and foot; and General Willes, landing with four regiments from Ireland, took the route through Chester towards the north, for the purpose of awing the numerous malcontents in Lancashire, where a rising was hourly expected.

The appearance of General Carpenter in Northumberland tranquillised the county. He instantly marched, with 900 dragoons, against the rebels, and forced them to fall back towards Woller; but being there joined by a corps of 200 Scottish horse, under Lords Kenmuir, Carnworth, and Wintoun, who had already proclaimed the pretender in different parts of Scotland, they again advanced to Kelso. Here they awaited with impatience the junction of a body of Highlanders, under Brigadier Macintosh, who was detached by the earl of Mar, with 2500 men, to make a descent on the Lothians, and surprise Edinburgh. During these movements, the earl of Mar occupied the pass of the Tay, established his head-quarters at Perth, and, after securing the province of Fife, and the whole northern coast of the Frith of Forth, turned towards Stirling, with the evident purpose

* Mentioned in a letter from Lady Blayney to the late Duchess of Marlborough.

of co-operating with the insurgents, already powerful in the Lothians.

Meantime the duke of Argyle had joined the royal troops at Stirling, but was unable to muster more than 3500 men. With this limited force, however, he did not hesitate to encounter the insurgents, and a desultory engagement took place at Dumblain with 9000 of the rebels, led by the earl of Mar. Some partial advantages were gained on either side, with little bloodshed; though the conflict terminated in the precipitate retreat of the rebel general. Both parties claimed the victory; but Argyle maintained his position at Stirling, while the insurgents retired to Perth, expecting the arrival of the pretender, whose presence they were prepared to hail as the harbinger of success.

General Carpenter having thrown himself on the flank of the rebels stationed at Kelso, and menaced their communications with the interior, it became necessary to extricate themselves from their perilous position. In such a heterogeneous body, conflicting opinions naturally prevailed; and after much altercation and delay, it was decided by the majority, to evade the attacks of the British commander by suddenly marching into Lancashire, where they expected to be joined by numerous partisans. Many of the Highlanders, however, refused to cross the border, and on the march to Jedburgh and Baynton, deserted in vast numbers. The main body, still animated by a spirit superior to their diminished force, and buoyed up with hopes of reinforcements, penetrated into Cumberland, and advanced by Penrith and Kendal into Lancashire. Here they had the mortification to find that the gentry kept aloof, and were appalled by the intelligence that the royal troops were assembling around them in so great force, as to afford little hopes of escape. The astounded leaders, finding their numbers reduced to 1500, took post at Preston, where they intrenched themselves, and hoped that the strength of their position would enable them to maintain their ground, till they were joined by the northern hordes, or the malcontents from the south and west.

This was the very spot which Marlborough foretold would be the scene of their downfal, and the termination of their hopes. The arrangements previously made were now

carried into effect; and while Argyle checked the movements of Mar, and secured the capital of Scotland, troops were despatched from different quarters, to overwhelm this small, but desperate body, who had fallen into the toils. General Carpenter rapidly followed them in their precipitate march; while General Willes no less rapidly advanced in the opposite direction.

The insurgents were confounded by these bold and vigorous movements, and overawed by the sudden accumulation of force. In the contentions naturally excited by the approach of danger, they neglected to guard the avenues which led to their position; and General Willes, to his surprise and satisfaction, advanced without opposition to the very precincts of Preston. After being repulsed on the 12th of November, in two vigorous attempts to penetrate into the town, he prudently suspended his attack; and, on the ensuing day, was joined by General Carpenter, with three regiments of dragoons. On this junction, the two generals invested the place; the brave, but misguided band of Highlanders, proposed to cut their way through their opponents, or perish in the attempt; but this desperate resolution being overruled by their leaders, and a capitulation rejected, they surrendered at discretion. In this small body we find no less than 75 English, and 143 Scottish noblemen and gentlemen, who had taken arms against their sovereign. The utmost lenity was shown to these misguided people; and, in contradiction to the Tory historians, who charge the Whigs with dyeing the royal ermines in blood, we observe that only three peers and twenty-six commoners paid the penalty of their treason.*

The suppression of the rebellion in Lancashire was soon followed by its extinction in Scotland.

At the very moment when the rebels had retreated to Perth, in hopes of maintaining themselves during the winter, and of advancing with an accumulated strength in the spring, they were confounded by intelligence of the capture of Inverness, the capital and key of the Highlands. This enterprise was accomplished by Simon Frazer, afterwards so notorious under the title of Lord Lovat, who, appearing suddenly before the fortress on the 10th of November, com-

* Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, chap. xi., and Lockhart's Papers.

pelled Lord Seaforth, the Jacobite governor, to withdraw, after a blockade of only two days. The loss of this most important post was rendered doubly afflicting, because it was achieved by a chieftain, who had been hitherto considered as a most devoted adherent to the exiled family, and afterwards sacrificed his life in their cause.

Such reverses were aggravated by intelligence still more fatal, announcing the death of Louis XIV., who expired on the 16th of September. The succession of a minor, Louis, the struggles for the government, and the apprehensions of civil war, should Philip assert his pretensions to the regency, as presumptive heir, by the legal order of succession, absorbed the attention of the French cabinet, and the cause of the Pretender hung in suspense. From this series of disasters, it became a matter of deliberation among the Jacobite chiefs, whether they should not furl the standard of rebellion, and disperse to their respective homes. They were, however, diverted from their resolution by the sudden arrival of the pretender.

Notwithstanding the gloomy aspect of affairs in his native country, and the loss of his royal patron, the gallant prince disdained to abandon an enterprise on which his only hopes depended. He passed in disguise to Dunkirk, and embarking on board a small vessel with Lord Teignmouth, the son of Marshal Berwick, and a few attendants, landed at Peterhead, on the 22d of December. Passing with his suite *incognito* through Aberdeen, on the 27th he repaired to Fetterosse, the chief seat of the earl mareschal*, and was hailed by him and the earl of Mar, in company with thirty noblemen and gentlemen of the first distinction. Being solemnly proclaimed king, he appointed the officers of his government and household, created peers, and conferred the orders of knighthood. On the 4th of January he made his public entry into Dundee, accompanied by the two earls, and followed by a cavalcade of 300 gentlemen on horseback.

* Keith, hereditary earl marshal of Scotland, was at this period only twenty years of age; and, with the enthusiasm and levity of youth, had embraced the cause of the Pretender at the persuasion of his mother, who was a Catholic. In consequence of this disloyalty, he and his brother were driven into exile; and after finding a temporary protection from different princes of Europe, finally closed their days in the service of Frederick II. king of Prussia.

He proceeded to Scone, the ancient place of coronation for the kings of Scotland, and issued orders for preparing the ceremony of his own inauguration. After displaying his mock dignity at Perth, in a solemn entry on horseback, he returned to Scone, where he began to exercise the functions of royalty; he issued six proclamations, in one of which he summoned to his standard all his subjects capable of bearing arms; and, in another, fixed his coronation for the 23d. On the 16th he held a general council, at which the chiefs of the rebels were present, and delivered an animating speech to the assembled clans. The gracefulness of his person, the glowing energy of his language, the recollection of his misfortunes, the admiration excited by his courage, made a deep impression on hearts burning with loyalty and devotion to the blood of their native princes. The effect was heightened by the sublimity of mountain scenery, the romantic dress and arms of the Highlanders, and the solemn grandeur of the royal palace, which recalled to mind the splendid scenes of Scottish glory. To a stranger it would have appeared as if a young and powerful monarch was in the act of ascending the throne of his ancestors, amidst the unanimous acclamations of a devoted people.

But this brief vision of royalty was the last gleam of his meteor-like sovereignty. Since the battle of Dumblain, the duke of Argyle had remained at Stirling, in a state of inaction, waiting for reinforcements and a train of artillery; urging the necessity of suspending farther operations till the winter was past, and exaggerating the dangers of a Highland campaign, in an inclement season, and with a scanty supply of provisions and forage. But the extinction of the rebellion in Lancashire, and the suppression of the seditious spirit in other parts of the kingdom, having given a large portion of the royal troops a new opportunity for action, the ministry judiciously decided on crushing the insurgents yet in arms, before they could gather new strength. Artillery was ordered for immediate embarkation at London, and a train prepared at Berwick, while columns of troops from all quarters filed towards the north. But to no aid did Marlborough, as commander-in-chief, more anxiously look than to that of the Dutch auxiliaries, whose tried courage he had witnessed, and who were free from all local attachment and

contagion of party. He placed particular alliance, also, on the skill and spirit of his friend Cadogan, for whom he had procured the command of these forces, and whose activity and zeal were strongly contrasted with the temporising and lukewarm conduct of Argyle.

On joining the royal army, Cadogan found the duke of Argyle anxious to invent excuses for inaction, and labouring to discourage the troops, by exaggerating the numbers of the enemy, and the dangers and difficulties of the service. But the orders of the cabinet, and the instructions of the captain-general, enabled him to combat this procrastinating spirit. Impatient of delay, he hastened to Berwick, to superintend the march of the train of artillery, and by his vigour and exertions the arrangements for the intended movements were speedily matured. Unusual efforts being made to clear the roads, the army began their march on the 29th of January. As they reached Tullibardine, on the fourth day of their progress, they received the satisfactory intelligence that this spirited advance had struck the rebels with consternation, and that the ephemeral sovereign and his adherents had hastily withdrawn from Perth.

At this crisis we find many interesting letters from Cadogan to the Duke of Marlborough, describing the march, and contradicting the mischievous and discouraging reports of Argyle. In one of these he draws a striking picture of the chagrin manifested by the Scottish commander, at the success of an enterprise which he had represented as desperate.

"*Dundee, Feb.* 4. 1715–16. — My lord; I still write one letter in French*, that your grace, when you think proper, may show it to the king.

"The duke of Argyle grows so intolerable uneasy, that it is almost impossible to live with him any longer; he is enraged at the success of this expedition, though he and his creatures attribute to themselves the honour of it. When I brought him the news of the rebels being run from Perth, he seemed thunderstruck, and was so visibly concerned at it, that even the foreign officers that were in the room took notice of it. I find he now intends to stay, notwithstanding his declaring publicly at

* George I. appears to have learnt French, but was unacquainted with the English language, and never evinced any desire to master this disadvantage of his position, nor indeed to acquaint himself with the political constitution and manners of his new subjects. — Ed.

Stirling, that he would return to London as soon as the business at Perth was over; he then, indeed, designed it, believing we should miscarry, and in order to have thrown the blame on me. Since the rebels quitting Perth, he has sent for five or six hundred of his Argyleshire men, who go before the army a day's march, to take possession of the towns the enemy have abandoned, and to plunder and destroy the country, which enrages our soldiers, who are forbid, under pain of death, to take the value of a farthing, though out of the rebels' houses. Not one of these Argyle-men appeared whilst the rebels were in Perth, and when they might have been of some use."

This once formidable rebellion terminated in a manner unworthy of its commencement; for the insurgent, being rapidly pursued by the royal army to Montrose, were deserted by their chief, who clandestinely embarked on board a French vessel, while his troops were amused with a military parade. The departure of the pretender was a signal for the retreat of the rebel host, who were not molested in their march, in consequence of Argyle's tardiness in pursuit; and after continuing their progress through Aberdeen, Strathspey, and Strathdown, under the direction of General Gordon, to the mountainous district of Badenoch, they dispersed, without any loss, to their respective homes in the Highlands.

At length the inactive conduct of Argyle awakened the suspicions and indignation of government. He was recalled; and the sole command transferred to Cadogan. The eminent services of the English general were rewarded with a peerage; and, in expressing his grateful acknowledgments to his patron, the Duke of Marlborough, he announces his certain conviction, that as he was now relieved from the control of a superior, who obstructed the offensive operations of the army, and connived at the escape of the insurgents, the rebellion would be utterly extinguished in the short space of a month.*

This prediction of Cadogan was verified, and Scotland being tranquillised, he returned to London, to receive the approbation of his sovereign, and the congratulations of his noble patron to whom he owed his promotion. Thus Marlborough had the heartfelt satisfaction to contribute, by his own counsel and official exertions, as well as by the agency of his faithful friend and skilful pupil in the art of war, to the suppression of the rebellion, and to the establishment of the Protestant line.

* General Cadogan to the Duke of Marlborough, Aberdeen, Feb. 23.

CHAP. CXV. — ILLNESS OF THE DUKE. — 1716–1722.

MARLBOROUGH had already sustained the misfortune to lose the most valued solace of declining age, by the successive deaths of his children at different periods. Since the decease of his only surviving son, in the bloom of youth, the fond father had derived consolation from the happy establishment of his daughters in marriage, and the increase of his posterity. In 1714, however, he was afflicted with the loss of his third daughter, Elizabeth, countess of Bridgewater, who died on the 22d of March, in the 26th year of her age. She was a woman of domestic virtues, imbued with a deep sense of religion, and endeared to her husband and parents, by her mild, affectionate, and dutiful demeanour. He had scarcely recovered from this calamity, before he was visited by one still more severe. His second daughter, Anne, countess of Sunderland, was endowed in the highest degree with personal and mental accomplishments. In beauty, she eclipsed most of her contemporaries; she combined the rare union of elevation of mind with humility, spirit with meekness, liveliness with discretion, and sound judgment with unassuming candour. She possessed an awful sense of religion, and exemplarily fulfilled all the duties of a daughter, a wife, and a mother.

After the return of the duke and duchess from the continent, she was the solace of her parents, and peculiarly beloved by her father; because she was the only one of his daughters who could submit to the control, and conciliate the capricious temper of his consort. Her interposition had also abated the edge of that political asperity which, in so froward an age, frequently interrupted the harmony of friends and the peace of families. This amiable woman had been long afflicted with a tedious disorder, which she bore with consummate fortitude and Christian piety. In this reduced state, her feeble frame could not resist the attack of a pleuritic fever, and, on the 15th of April, she sunk into the grave, in the 29th year of her age.

Her loss was deeply felt, not only by her parents, who had so long experienced her endearing qualities and affectionate attachment, but by her husband, whose irascible temper she

had softened, and whose propensity to extravagance and play she had often restrained. Indeed, nothing can convey a stronger picture of her merits and virtues than a prayer which she was accustomed to use during the absence of her husband in his embassy at Vienna, and an affectionate letter delivered to him after her decease.

"O most gracious and merciful Lord God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, who art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain on the broad sea, hear the voice of my prayer, now I cry unto thee, on the behalf of him who is dearest to me. O Lord, at all times, and in all places, bless, preserve, and keep him, both in body and soul, from all adversities which may happen to him. In all danger, and under every temptation, be thou still his Almighty Protector unto his life's end; more especially, I beseech thee, at this time, to keep him in thy care, that no evil may befall him in the way that he goeth, but that he may be always in safety, under thy protection, from all perils, and return again in peace. O thou who commandest the winds and waves and they obey thee, make them favourable to him in his voyages, both in his going out and coming in; conduct him safely into the haven where he would be. O Lord, in whose hands is the breath of all mankind, preserve that dear person in health and security, that no disorder from within, nor violence from without, may occasion pain and trouble to him; and when he is far off from me let him find himself nigh unto thee, through the benefits of thy saving presence and defence. O blessed Lord, I pray thee more especially for his sake, for those persons he leaves behind him, that no mischief may happen to them in this that may occasion sorrow to him in a strange land; and let it be thy gracious will to prosper all his negotiations abroad, and make me, good Lord, thankful for these blessings; and grant we may live in love and peace together, till death shall make a yet longer separation; all which, in all humility of soul, I beg of thee in the name, and for the sake of Jesus my Saviour, *Amen*, O Blessed Lord, *Amen, Amen.*"

The letter to her husband, which is no less interesting, is preserved in the hand of the amiable writer."*

"*Altrop, Sept.* 9. 1716. — I have always found it so tender a subject (to you, my dear), to talk of my dying, that I have chose rather to leave my mind in writing, which, though very insignificant, is some ease to me. Your dear self, and the dear children, are my only concern in this world; I hope in God you will find comfort for the loss of a wife I am sure you loved too well not to want a great deal. I would be no farther remembered than what will contribute to your ease, which is, to be careful (as I was) not to make your circumstances uneasy, by living beyond what you

* It is thus endorsed by the duchess — "A copy of what my dear daughter writ to her lord, not to be given him till after she was dead."

have, which I could not, with all the care that was possible, quite prevent. When you have any addition, think of your poor children, and that you have not an estate to live on, without making some addition, by saving. You will ever be miserable if you give way to the love of play. As to the children, pray get my mother, the duchess of Marlborough, to take care of the girls, and if I leave any boys too little to go to school; for to be left to servants is very bad for children, and a man can't take the care of little children that a woman can. For the love that she has for me, and the duty that I have ever showed her, I hope she will do it, and be ever kind to you, who was dearer to me than my life. Pray take care to see the children married with a prospect of happiness, for in that you will show your kindness to me; and never let them want education or money while they are young. My father has been so kind as to give my children fortunes, so that I hope they won't miss the opportunity of being settled in the world for want of portions. But your own daughter may want your help, which I hope you will think to give her, tho' it should straiten your income, or to any of mine, if they want it. Pray let Mr. Fourneaux get some good-natured man for Lord Spencer's governor, whom he may settle with him before he dies, and be fit to go abroad with him. I beg of you to spare no expense to improve him, and to let him have an allowance for his pocket, to make him easy. You have had five thousand pounds of the money that you know was mine, which my mother gave me yearly; whenever you can, let him have the income of that for his allowance, if he has none any other way. And don't be as careless of the dear children as when you relied upon me to take care of them, but let them be your care, tho' you should marry again; for your wife may wrong them, when you don't mind it. You owe Fanchon, by a bond, twelve hundred pounds, for which I gave her fourscore pounds a year interest. Pray, whenever it is in your power, be kind to her, and to her children, for she was ever faithful to me. Pray burn all my letters in town or in the country. We must all die; but 'tis hard to part with one so much beloved, and in whom there was so much happiness as you, my dearest, ever were to me. My last prayers shall be to the Lord Almighty, to give you all blessings in this world, and grant that we may meet happy in the next.

"A. SUNDERLAND.

"Pray give Lady Anne my diamond ear-rings; the middle drops are my mother's. And give Dye my pearl necklace and watch, and give Lady Frances Spencer my diamond buckle. And give Mr. Fourneaux the medal of gold which you gave me when I was married, and the little picture I have of yours and of Lord Spencer's."

This affectionate and heart-rending appeal Lord Sunderland, in the first impulse of grief, sent by his steward to the Duchess of Marlborough, from whom it drew a sympathising letter of condolence, expressive of her readiness to comply with her dear daughter's last request, which she religiously fulfilled.

"*May* 13. 1716. — I send you enclosed that most precious letter which you sent me yesterday by Mr. Charlton. You will easily believe it has made me drop a great many tears, and you may be very sure that to my life's end I shall observe very religiously all that my poor dear child desired. I was pleased to find that my own inclinations had led me to resolve upon doing every thing that she mentions before I knew it was her request, except taking Lady Anne, which I did not offer, thinking that since you take Lady Frances* home, who is 18 years old, she would be better with you than me, as long as you live, with the servants that her dear mother had chose to put about her; and I found by Mr. Charlton this thought was the same that you had. But I will be of all the use that I can be to her, in every thing that she wants me; and if I should happen to live longer than you, though so much older, I will then take as much care of her as if she were my own child. I have resolved to take poor Lady Anne Egerton†, who, I believe, is very ill looked after. She went yesterday to Ashridge, but I will send for her to St. Alban's, as soon as you will let me have dear Lady Dye‡; and while the weather is hot, I will keep them two and Lady Harriot, with a little family of servants to look after them, and be there as much as I can; but the Duke of Marlborough will be running up and down to several places this summer, where one can't carry children; and I don't think his health so good as to trust him by himself. I should be glad to talk to Mr. Fourneaux, to know what servants there is of my dear child's that you don't intend to keep, that if there is any of them that can be of use in this new addition to my family, I might take them for several reasons. I desire, when it is easy to you, that you will let me have some little trifle that my dear child used to wear in her pocket, or any other way; and I desire Fanchon will look for some little cup that she used to drink in. I had some of her hair not long since, that I asked her for; but Fanchon may give me a better lock at the full length."

Reply of Lord Sunderland. §

"*May* 13. — Nothing, dear madam, can ever express the sense I have of your tenderness and kindness in the letter I had from you to-day, and in what Mr. Charlton had said to me from you before. I thought as soon as I found that precious dear letter, I ought in justice to send it to you, that you might see the desires of that dear, dear angel, and at the same time have the comfort and satisfaction of seeing that, out of your own tenderness and goodness, you had resolved to do all she desired in it, even before you had seen it. The tenderness expressed in that dear letter

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* Lady Frances, his daughter by his first wife, Lady Arabella Cavendish, daughter and co-heir of Henry Cavendish, duke of Newcastle. She afterwards married Henry Howard, earl of Carlisle.

† Daughter of Elizabeth, countess of Bridgewater.

‡ Lady Diana Spencer, second daughter of Lord Sunderland, by his late deceased wife.

§ Endorsed by the duchess, "Lord Sunderland's letter in answer to mine, after my dear daughter died."

towards me, is a fresh instance of the greatness of my loss and misfortune. This is too moving to say more of it. I am the unhappiest man living; I feel it, and shall ever feel it. Poor little dear Dye shall come to you whenever you order it. Mr. Fourneaux will wait upon you with the names of what servants I shall part with; there are but two or three. I have not yet been able to look over the things the dear woman has left; as soon as I have, I will send those things you mention, and you will choose what had rather. Fanchon will take care of the cup you desire, and the dear hair. I and mine shall never forget your goodness."

While the afflicted father continued in his retirement at Holywell House, brooding over the loss of his departed daughter, he was first attacked by that paralytic disorder of which we trace a prognostic in the oppressive headaches and giddiness so repeatedly alluded to in his correspondence.

He was seized on the 28th of May with such violence that he was deprived of speech and sense, but was speedily relieved by the medical aid of his devoted friend, Sir Samuel Garth, and partially recovered. On the 7th of July he had sufficient strength to proceed to Bath, where he was recommended to drink the waters. As he approached the city, on the 14th, he was met by a numerous cavalcade of the nobility and gentry, and was greeted by peals of bells and the acclamations of shouting multitudes. On his arrival, he received the congratulations of the mayor and aldermen, in their due formalities, accompanied with the most ardent wishes for the re-establishment of his health. Their hopes were, indeed, speedily accomplished; for, on the 18th of October, he was sufficiently recovered to visit Blenheim, and expressed great satisfaction in the survey of a place which reminded him of his great achievements, though the splendid edifice was yet too unfinished to offer much domestic accommodation. But this gleam of returning health was of short duration; for, on the 10th of November, he was seized with a more severe attack of his paralytic disorder. He was visited by Sir Samuel Garth and two other physicians; but his indisposition increasing, the alarm spread among his family, and his daughters and sons-in-law hastened to pay those duties which they considered as their last to their departing parent. The paroxysm, however, subsiding, his grace again speedily recovered his senses and health, and was conveyed without difficulty to Marlborough House, in London. By these severe and successive attacks, he has been represented as

reduced to a state of absolute debility, both of body and mind; and the duchess has been accused of leading her infirm and suffering husband into public view, and exposing to the gazing multitude so pitiful a spectacle of human imbecility. Even the language of the poet has been admitted into history, and the expression —

"From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,"

has not only been received as truth, but as furnishing a striking subject of moral reflection. Nothing, however, is more false than this erroneous opinion, and the cruel aspersion to which it has given birth. The duke, indeed, lost, as is usual in such cases, the use of his speech, but afterwards recovered it, and conversed with little difficulty, though there were a few words which he could not distinctly articulate. He retained his memory and understanding little impaired; for he continued till six months before his death, attending his duty in parliament, and occasionally assisting in committees appointed to draw up addresses.* He likewise performed the functions of his offices of captain-general and master of the ordnance with his accustomed regularity.

He himself, indeed, conscious of his increasing infirmities, and feeling the decay of his powers and the diminution of his activity, was desirous of retiring from business, and, through Lord Sunderland, tendered the resignation of his employments; but the king, with a due respect for his person, and a grateful recollection of his former services, refused to accept the offer, declaring that his retirement would excite as much pain as if a dagger should be plunged into his bosom. The duchess, however, was of opinion that her husband was persuaded to retain his situation by the entreaties of Lord Sunderland †, who stood in need of his father-in-law's weight and influence to support him and the ephemeral administration which he had recently formed, to the exclusion of Townshend, Walpole, and some of the principal Whigs. But, whoever was the author, or whatever was the cause of his continuance in office, Marlborough had no reason to be satisfied with his compliance; for, from this period, he was a mere cypher, and

* I trace in the journals repeated proofs of his attendance in the House of Peers till the 27th of November, 1721.

† Narrative of the Duchess.

exposed to repeated slights and mortifications, even in his own departments.

Such being the condition of the illustrious hero whose actions we have endeavoured to delineate, we may here consider his political career as drawing to a close, and forbear to enter into any detail of the complicated negotiations and change of foreign policy, which, by reconciling the rival powers of England and France, preserved, with little interruption, the peace of the continent, and gave to our country the blessing of a tranquillity which it had not experienced since the Revolution.*

Nor is it more necessary to descant on the political feuds in the cabinet, and the schism among the Whigs, which produced the temporary removal of Townshend, Walpole, and their adherents, and the formation of a new administration, under the auspices of Sunderland, who, in the successive posts of president of the council, secretary of state, and first lord of the treasury, was considered as the prime minister, and reigned paramount in the favour of the king; until the fatal explosion of the South Sea project transferred him from his official situation to that of groom of the stole.

Among the few public acts in which Marlborough, after his indisposition, took a peculiar interest, was the party struggle on the trial of the earl of Oxford. The accused peer had been detained two years in the Tower, although the articles of impeachment had already been carried through both houses. Among these were two, charging him with high treason, and others with high crimes and misdemeanors. The united body of Whigs, who had suffered so much from his administration, had originally resolved to carry on the impeachment, and hoped, even if they could not convict him on the primary, at least to prove him guilty of the secondary, charges. Although he was supported by the Tories and Jacobites; yet his adversaries were too numerous and powerful to allow a probability of his complete acquittal. But fortunately for him, the recent schism of the Whigs converted some of his most bitter enemies into secret partisans. These were the ministers lately dismissed from

* For these transactions see the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, and the History of the House of Austria.

their offices, among whom we distinguish Walpole, the chairman of the committee, and the author of the secret report, and Townshend, the other leader of the party.

With a view of embarrassing the administration, and conciliating their new allies, this powerful body of malcontents joined the Tories and Jacobites to screen the impeached peer. After having so violently accused him, and drawn up the charges in such explicit and forcible terms, they could not act so inconsistently as to authorise a formal acquittal, and, therefore, they adroitly contrived to excite a dispute between the two houses of parliament, which they knew would produce the same effect.

For this purpose, the favourers of Oxford in the House of Lords proposed to change the regular order of proceeding, by entering first on the charges of high treason, on which the evidence was most defective. The requisite motion was made in the House of Peers by Lord Harcourt, and supported by the Tories and Jacobites, as well as by the disaffected Whigs, led by Lord Townshend. It was ably and warmly opposed by Sunderland, Cadogan, Coningsby, and the whole ministerial party. Marlborough was present at the debate, and gave his vote against the motion, which was, however, carried by a majority of 88 against 56.

The Commons, as was expected, strenuously opposed the resolution as an infringement of their privileges; and several messages and altercations occurred between the houses, which served only to widen the breach. Both parties peremptorily persisted in their determination, and the Lords rejected the proposal of a free conference, which was demanded by the Commons. The matter was thus brought to the desired crisis; and the Lords having appointed the 1st of July for the continuance of the trial, the Commons determined not to maintain the prosecution, and adjourned to the third.

On the day appointed, the Lords assembled in Westminster Hall, and as no prosecutor appeared, returned to the house. A motion was then made, that as no charge had been maintained against Robert Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, he should be acquitted of high treason and other crimes and misdemeanors. This motion was strenuously opposed by Sunderland and the ministerial party; but an amendment

for the omission of the words, "other crimes and misdemeanors," being negatived, it was carried by 106 against 38.

Having arranged the form of proceeding, the house adjourned to Westminster Hall, with the exception of the thirty-eight peers in the minority, who were unwilling to exhibit their discomfiture to the public eye. The question was now solemnly proposed to each peer who was present, and the accused minister was unanimously acquitted of the charges preferred against him.

Marlborough, though unable, from infirmity, to take a share in the discussion, was present at every debate, and voted in favour of the prosecution. We have also the authentic testimony of Erasmus Lewis, the secretary and adherent of Oxford, that he was ranked with the most hostile opponents of the impeached minister; that he was deeply chagrined at the result of the process; and that the duchess, according to Swift, by whose vengeance it was supposed to have been instigated, was "distracted with disappointment."*

The latter period of Marlborough's life was marked by one of the most extraordinary incidents which occurs in our domestic history,—the rise, progress, and fall of the South Sea scheme. We cannot enter farther into this memorable transaction, than merely to state, that the foundation was laid by Harley, when he incorporated a portion of the public creditors into a company, who were to enjoy the monopoly of a trade to the Spanish West Indies. It was afterwards adopted and extended by Sunderland, who sought in this visionary scheme the means of gratifying the Hanoverian junta, and increasing his interest in parliament. Notwith-

* We have paid more particular attention to the detail of this celebrated trial; because the result has furnished one among the many unfounded accusations and surmises, which have been raised against the character of Marlborough. The acquittal of Oxford has been solely ascribed to his secret interposition, from a fear, lest the ex-minister should execute a threat of disclosing his treasonable correspondence with king James and the pretender; and different versions of the fact have been circulated from traditional and hearsay reports. Those who are curious in scrutinising such evidence, we refer to the *Biographia Britannica*, Art. Churchill, Appendix, where two different relations are given, totally contrary to each other, and both bearing the character of improbability.

standing the recent and fatal result of a similar project in France, the effect of the plan far surpassed his most sanguine expectations. Every rank and class in society pressed forward to participate in the privileges of so envied a community; and the ministers, through whose recommendation the shares were principally distributed, were courted and regarded as the benefactors of the nation, and the dispensers of inexhaustible treasures.

The mind of Marlborough was not competent to form just calculations on a scheme so complicated and visionary, but he appears to have caught a portion of the national enthusiasm, and wished to increase the share which he previously possessed in the original stock. The duchess also profited by her relationship to Lord Sunderland, to obtain subscriptions for herself, her friends, and connexions. When, however, the value of the stock rose to an enormous height, and the national infatuation was hurrying to a crisis, she foresaw that no profit, however vast, could answer the expectation of the public, and that the fall would be as rapid as the rise. She resisted, therefore, all the solicitations of her son-in-law, and the lures of the other projectors, to embark farther in the scheme; she not only dissuaded her husband from risking any portion of his disposable property, but even induced him to sell out the share he already possessed, before the dreaded crisis arrived, and thus enabled him to realise a sum of no less than 100,000*l.**

We have frequently had occasion to mention the embarrassments, which the Duke of Marlborough experienced from the vehement and petulant temper of his wife, even in the height of his power, and in the full vigour of his faculties. Such embarrassments were still more deeply felt, when he was advanced in years, declining in health, and suffering in mind from bodily infirmity.

It might naturally be supposed that the duchess would, at length, have been satisfied with an administration formed under her son-in-law, and composed of persons who had been patronised by herself and her husband, particularly as they had superseded Walpole and Townshend, by whom she had conceived herself treated with unmerited disrespect. Nothing,

* Letters to Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, from the Duchess of Marlborough.

however, but unbounded submission, and unlimited power, could content her imperious and capricious temper; and the new ministers were scarcely established in authority, before they incurred her displeasure. In addition to her political objections to Sunderland, as the patron of the South Sea scheme, she was personally offended by his marriage with a third wife*, who was not only of disproportioned age, but without property, and inferior in rank and connexions. Her displeasure was aggravated by the settlement of a considerable part of his limited estate on his new consort, to the detriment of her grand-children. Her insulting remonstrances made a deep impression on a mind no less vehement and irritable than her own; and their correspondence, at this period, abounds in terms of mutual obloquy and invective.

Against Cadogan, who was associated with Sunderland in the ministry, and whose services had been liberally rewarded with power and honours, she fostered still greater dislike, from other causes. She even accused him of an attempt to appropriate part of the 50,000*l.* which the duke had commissioned him to invest in the Dutch funds, because he placed it on Austrian securities, which bore a higher interest, but were so much depreciated, that when required to refund his charge, he found great difficulty in realising the principal. The demand gave rise to violent bickerings, and ended in a litigation, in which the perseverance of the duchess established the claims of her husband.†

Secretary Craggs had been long the object of her contempt and abhorrence, from an unjust suspicion, that he was the author of an anonymous letter sent to her in 1712, by the penny post, which contained the most cruel aspersions on her person, character, and morals. Her aversion was not lessened by his patronage of the South Sea scheme, or by a knowledge of the enormous gains, which his father was deriving from that nefarious project. Lord Stanhope was also loaded with a share of her displeasure; as in him she saw a candidate for the offices held by her husband; and in

* Judith, daughter of Benjamin Tichborne, Esq.

† From the voluminous case of Lord Cadogan, preserved in the Marlborough Papers, as well as from the narratives of the Duchess.

one of her letters bitterly reproached her son-in-law with favouring his pretensions.

Actuated by these antipathies and suspicions, she did not spare the ministers in her conversations, public or private; but, according to Secretary Craggs, made them the never-failing theme of her invectives on all occasions. She even induced her husband to join the general clamour for justice against the South Sea directors and their patrons. Such attacks provoked equal retaliation on their part; and, in this state of mutual recrimination, a plea was eagerly caught to mortify her and the duke in the most sensible degree.

For some days a rumour was cautiously whispered in the higher circles that the Duchess of Marlborough was implicated in a plot for the restoration of the pretender. Aware of the irritable state of her husband, she concealed it from his knowledge; but he was suddenly summoned to the house of his son-in-law, and acquainted, in language by no means equivocal or respectful, with the charge against his wife. Appearing deeply afflicted on his return, she inquired the cause of his absence and emotion. "I have been," he said, "to Lord Sunderland, who accuses you of a plot to bring in the pretender and of furnishing him with a sum of money." She treated the imputation with her usual haughty contempt, and endeavoured to soothe his agitation. But when apprised that it had been communicated to the king, and that the duke himself was implicated by common rumour, she appeared at the drawing room, in order to ascertain the effect it had produced on the royal mind. Being twice received with unusual coldness, where she had hitherto been treated with marked attention, she wrote a letter to the king in vindication of her conduct. She caused it to be translated into French, and, having obtained an audience at the apartments of the duchess of Kendal, delivered it with her own hand. The original is here submitted to the reader.

"Sir; As your Majesty's known love to justice makes you always open to the complaints of an injured and innocent person, so your goodness will pardon this application, which would have been avoided if my Lord Marlborough's indisposition had not prevented him from laying before your Majesty that which I most humbly beg leave to do in this manner. Nothing in the world seems so incredible as that, after all the trouble and danger that I have been exposed to, for my zeal for your Majesty and your family, any one can imagine me capable of criminal correspondence

with your Majesty's greatest enemy, and one who must look upon my Lord Marlborough and myself as the objects of his highest resentment. Your Majesty will readily believe that it was with the greatest astonishment that I learned I had been represented to your majesty as guilty of so black and foolish a crime. 'Tis with inexpressible concern that I have borne the thoughts of it for a few days; and, therefore, I am forced to beg that your Majesty, out of compassion, as well as justice, would be pleased to afford me an opportunity of vindicating myself from so groundless and cruel an accusation. This I am ready to do in such a manner as shall seem most proper to your Majesty's great wisdom, till which time I cannot help accounting myself the most unhappy of all your Majesty's faithful subjects.

"*Dec.* 14. 1720. S. MARLBOROUGH."

She quitted the room, requesting to be honoured with the commands of his majesty, and, after declining the invitation of the duchess of Kendal, to return, on the plea that she could not speak French, received an answer in the king's own hand.

"*St. James's, Dec.* 17. 1720. — Whatever I may have been told upon your account, I think I have shown, on all occasions, the value I have for the services of the duke, your husband; and I am always disposed to judge of him and you by the behaviour of each of you in regard to my service. Upon which, I pray God, my Lady Marlborough, to preserve you in all happiness.

"GEORGE R."

Attributing to the suggestions of the ministry the guarded language of this reply, she made a new and stronger appeal through the duchess of Kendal.

"*Dec.* 23. 1720. — I cannot possibly forbear to give your grace this new trouble, to express to you the true sense I have of your great civility, and obliging readiness to assist me in the favour I lately begged of you.

"I must ever acknowledge the goodness and condescension of his majesty, in so soon honouring me with a letter under his own hand, in return to what I thought myself obliged to lay before him. It cannot become me to be any farther importunate or troublesome to his majesty, or to desire to give the least unnecessary interruption to those thoughts, which are much better employed, than they could be in any thing that concerns me. But I cannot but still hope, from his majesty's honour, compassion, and justice, that he will, at his own greatest leisure, choose out some opportunity to permit me to vindicate myself to him in a more particular manner, — a happiness which I am desirous of, with the utmost impatience, both as it is my greatest ambition to appear innocent to him above all the world, and as I know that I can justify myself beyond the power of all contradiction, or even suspicion.

"Madam, permit me to say I am injured beyond all expression, and this by an accusation as absurd and incredible as it is wicked. Neither the Duke of Marlborough nor myself can have any safety and security, even of our lives as well as fortunes, but in the safety of his majesty and his family; and is it possible to be conceived, that either of us should be so weak as to contrive or assist in the bringing on our own destruction? But I build not my justification upon such arguments only; it is a subject upon which I can, and do defy the whole world, which I would not do, if I did not know the perfect innocence of my heart, as well as of my actions, and the zeal of my secret wishes for his majesty, as well as the tenor of my outward behaviour. I cannot suppose any man, of all that I know in the world, capable of so great an injustice as to be the author of so wicked an accusation, except one, who perhaps may have malice enough to me, and native dishonour enough in himself, to be guilty of it; and when I say that the person I mean is Mr. Secretary Craggs*, it is enough to add, that his behaviour towards me has been long ago of such a nature, that I have not permitted him these nine years so much as to speak to me. The good nature and humanity I have already experienced in your grace, have occasioned you this second trouble; and give me, at the same time, this fresh occasion of assuring you, that I shall ever remember your civilities with the highest respect, and that I am, with sincerity, madam, your grace's, &c.

"S. MARLBOROUGH."

To this appeal the duchess received no other answer than a reference to the letter already written by the king. She was, therefore, so highly indignant at a proceeding, which she considered as cruel and injurious, that it was one of the primary causes of her alienation from the court, and subsequent opposition to the government. The mutual resentment excited by this charge, produced also a serious misunderstanding in the Marlborough family, and a suspension of intercourse with Lord Sunderland took place, which lasted till nearly the period of his death, on the 19th of April, 1722.†

The decease of Lord Sunderland‡ produced an unex-

* It is but justice to the memory of Mr. Craggs to observe, that he always strenuously denied the charge advanced against him by the duchess.

† This incident is minutely described in the narratives of the duchess, and in a letter to the late Duchess of Marlborough from Lady Blayney, whose mother, Lady Cairnes, attended the duchess to court, and was her confidant in the whole transaction.

‡ By his death, the only survivor of the great Whig junta was the earl of Orford, who resigned in disgust on the schism in the Whig ministry, and continued out of office till his decease in 1727.

On the accession of George I. Lord Somers was too infirm, from a

pected embarrassment to his father-in-law. As he had filled the highest offices of state, and had been intrusted with the distribution of money, appropriated to the recompence of secret services, his papers were sealed up by order of government. Application was instantly made for the delivery of these documents, but in vain; and a suit was accordingly instituted against the two secretaries of state, which continued in suspense during the life of the Duke of Marlborough. After his decease, it was prosecuted by the duchess and Lord Morpeth, as executors; and, on the 30th of November, 1722, a court of delegates decided in favour of the defendants, on the plea that no private person could inspect the papers of a deceased minister, until they had been previously revised by the officers of the crown. After this revision, those documents which did not relate to the secrets of state, were restored to the family, and are now embodied in the archives of Blenheim.

In justice to the memory of this statesman, we ought to observe, that although he was the principal patron of a scheme which produced such general calamity, he used it merely as a political engine, and did not enrich himself by the public infatuation. Even Mr. Brodrick, who was one of the persons charged to investigate the transaction, and fostered strong prejudices against him, acquits him of any participation, and represents him as the dupe of the directors. He died greatly embarrassed, owing, among other creditors, 10,000*l.* to his father-in-law; and leaving his numerous family in such straitened circumstances, that the younger children were indebted for their education and maintenance to the affection of the Duchess of Marlborough. His library, which was only rivalled by that of Lord Oxford, in rarity and extent, was one of the items of his personal property, and now forms the basis of the noble collection preserved at Blenheim.

paralytic attack, to accept any share in the administration. After a lingering decline, he died in 1716. Lord Halifax expired in 1715; and the marquess of Wharton in 1717.

Chap. CXVI. — Works at Blenheim. —1716–1722.

We have reserved for this portion of our work, the account of the litigation, which arose relative to the building at Blenheim, that we might exhibit to the reader a more regular and detailed narrative of a transaction, which had long been a source of perplexity to the Duke of Marlborough.

From the scattered papers relative to this subject, which are so numerous, and, in many parts, so unconnected, it is difficult to form a regular narrative, even if we should encumber our pages with a quantity of dry and uninteresting correspondence. We shall, therefore, only submit to the reader a brief relation of this celebrated process, and the circumstances from which it arose.

We have already stated the promise of the queen, to build, at her own expense, a palace at Woodstock, to be called Blenheim, in honour of the splendid victory; and, that during the administration of Lord Godolphin, various sums had been issued by the royal warrants, amounting to nearly 200,000*l.** Yet notwithstanding the great amount of these issues, they were far from being adequate to the expenses already incurred, and considerable arrears were due to the contractors and workmen, as well as to those who had furnished loans for the purpose of continuing the works.

After the dismission of Godolphin, the new ministers were not inclined to gratify the Duke of Marlborough; and not only evaded as much as possible the grant of further supplies, but endeavoured to throw the whole expense on the duke himself, by eliciting either from him or his duchess, a promise to indemnify the contractors and workmen. The duchess, aware of this artful proceeding, suspended the works in 1710; and only a small sum was issued by the treasurer, sufficient to protect them against the approach of winter.

The undertaking was, however, resumed in the spring of

* We find from a paper, which appears to have been the opinion of some lawyer, probably Sir John Northey, the duchess's solicitor, that 220,000*l.* were issued in the queen's time into the hands of Mr. Taylor, to be paid by him towards defraying the charge of the works according to the direction of Mr. Travers; and of this sum, 30,000*l.* appears to have been issued by Lord Oxford.

the ensuing year, by the architect, who obtained a balance of 7000*l.* due on a warrant granted by the late lord treasurer Godolphin. He also applied to Lord Oxford for a farther advance towards completing this national monument. However unwilling to comply, Oxford was aware that the queen's promise was pledged, and the national honour engaged, and that he could not wholly resist so just a claim. By his order, the architect submitted to him a memorial, in which, the demand to clear the debts, and to finish what was intended to be done in the current year, was estimated at 87,000*l.* To the inquiry of the treasurer, whether he had well considered the estimate, and whether any thing was omitted, Vanbrugh replied, that many things were left out, which he believed the Duke of Marlborough might think fit to do at his own expense; but he hoped that the sum which he had specified might carry the design, as far as he understood the queen at first intended to be done, on a public consideration. From Vanbrugh's report, the treasurer appeared to be well satisfied with this explanation, because the sum required was considerably less than that which he had himself calculated.

Accordingly, on the 17th of July, the treasurer obtained the queen's sign manual for 20,000*l.*, telling the architect at the same time, that he would procure a farther grant as soon as possible. "On this," Vanbrugh adds, "I acquainted the chief undertakers with what had passed at the treasury; upon which encouragement they went on with the work, without insisting that all the money then issued should go in discharge of the debt, which otherwise they would have done." With this supply, the works were carried on, though slowly, until the spring of the ensuing year.

The building, however, still continued to occupy the attention of government; for, on the 25th of June 1713, an estimate was laid before the House of Commons of the debt on the civil list, due at Midsummer, 1710, amounting to 511,762*l.* One of the items was the sum of 60,000*l.* by estimation, for the building of Woodstock. In strict justice, therefore, this sum of 60,000*l.* should have been assigned for the liquidation of the said debt, and the prosecution of the work; but we do not find that more than 10,000*l.* was paid for that purpose, which was not advanced till towards

the close of the year, when the queen was indisposed, and Oxford wished to conciliate the Duke of Marlborough.

On the accession of the new sovereign, Marlborough had reason to hope that new warrants would be issued from the treasury, for defraying the arrears and completing the work, in conformity with the original design. He accordingly obtained from the architect an estimate of the requisite expense, which, including the gardens and bridge, amounted to 54,527*l.* 4*s.* 2*d.*; and, therefore, exceeded the former estimate in a duplicate proportion.

The hopes of Marlborough were in some measure gratified; for in the first year of the new reign, an act was passed "for enlarging the funds of the Bank of England, and for satisfying an arrear for work and materials at Blenheim, incurred while that building was carried on at the expense of her late majesty." This act rendered the crown responsible for such arrears, and directed that the debts incurred before the first of June, 1712, when the works were suspended by order of the queen, should be liquidated out of the sum of 500,000*l.* which had been previously granted for the payment of the debts on the civil list, and the arrears of the revenues belonging to her late majesty. In pursuance of this act a commission was appointed, under letters of privy seal, consisting of Messrs. Lowndes, Craggs, and Sloper, who were authorised to issue 30,000*l.*, in liquidation of the arrears. The respective claims being accordingly investigated, each claimant received one-third of his demands, making a total of more than 16,000*l.*, through the hands of Mr. Travers, the surveyor-general to the crown. Another payment was afterwards made, to the amount of 9000*l.*

The creditors, however, were not satisfied with this partial liquidation; and in Easter term, 1718, two of the principal claimants instituted a suit in the Court of Exchequer against the Duke of Marlborough and Sir John Vanbrugh, as his surveyor of the works and buildings, appointed by an instrument signed by Lord Godolphin, and authorised to make contracts for work and materials. Their demand included nearly 8000*l.* for the principal and interest of the sums due to them, since the payment made under the letters of privy seal. Their application being ineffectually resisted, the

court decided that the Duke of Marlborough was rendered responsible for their demands, in virtue of the instrument signed by Lord Godolphin, which conveyed the requisite powers to Sir John Vanbrugh for acting in his behalf.

The cause was carried by appeal into the House of Lords. After hearing the arguments of counsel, the peers, on the 24th of May, rejected the petition of the duke, and confirmed the decree of the Court of Exchequer. He was himself present, and had the mortification to find the decision supported by a great majority, among whom were many of his friends and relatives. It is difficult to reconcile such a decision with the principles of equity and national honour; and, therefore, we can only attribute the resolution of the peers to the secret influence of the ministry, who were desirous of exonerating the crown from so heavy a charge.

The duke being rendered legally responsible for the various debts arising out of the building, had no other resource than to apply to the Court of Chancery, in order to compel the several creditors to submit to an examination of their claims; and the persons who had been intrusted with the issues of money to verify their payments. The usual procrastination of the court, and the numerous accounts which required scrutiny, together with the attempts made to evade investigation, protracted the cause beyond the duration of the duke's life. But to satisfy the curiosity of the reader, we shall observe that considerable mismanagement and fraud were proved to have existed in the conduct of the building, and that several items were rejected, and others diminished. A favourable decree was accordingly given by the lord chancellor Macclesfield, who pronounced a splendid eulogium on the memory of the deceased hero, and depicted in lively terms the dishonour which the nation would incur, by throwing on his representatives the charge of a structure, which was undertaken at the order of the sovereign, as a reward and memorial of his services, and repeatedly sanctioned by the acts of the legislature.*

* It is hoped no undue share of the immense wealth of the duchess influenced the judgment of this impeached lord chancellor. It appears (*Wade's British History*, p. 375.), that Macclesfield was shortly after fined 30,000*l.* for bribery and embezzlement in the discharge of his judicial duties. — Ed.

In the interim, the Duke of Marlborough had taken several exceptions to the report of the remembrancer in the Court of Exchequer, who was empowered to assess the debt; he not only denied the delivery of the materials and execution of the work in question, but combated the charge of interest as contrary to the nature of the transaction, and even beyond the demands of the plaintiffs themselves.

Subsequent to his death these exceptions were taken into consideration. The two first were overruled; but, after several amendments, the court sanctioned the report of the remembrancer, charging the duke with interest on the said debts from January 1715, and making the claims of the plaintiffs amount to above 9000*l.*

An application for rescinding these orders being ineffectual, the cause was again carried under a new shape to the House of Peers, by the duchess and the other executors. It was taken into consideration on the 27th and 28th of February, 1723–24. After a patient investigation, the orders of the Court of Exchequer were reversed; and the remembrancer was directed to enter into a new scrutiny of the litigated claims, to ascertain whether the materials were furnished and the work executed in conformity with the contracts; and to state the debts which were really and justly due to the respective claimants.

By this decision, the representatives of the Duke of Marlborough were made responsible for such arrears as should be proved to be due on the suspension of the works; but we have not the means of tracing the progress of the investigation, or ascertaining the exact sums with which his estate was finally charged.*

* It is curious to examine the grounds on which the Duke of Marlborough was deemed responsible for the arrears, in contradiction to the public pledge of the sovereign, and the acts of the legislature.

1st. An instrument, dated May 23. 1705, signed by Lord Godolphin-wherein his lordship, at the request of the Duke of Marlborough, aps, points Henry Joynes to inspect all contracts with workmen and artificer relating to the building a large fabric for a mansion-house, which the Duke of Marlborough had resolved to erect at Woodstock, to admeasure and keep the accounts thereof, and to render to the Duke an account of his actings and doings.

2d. An instrument, signed by Lord Godolphin, Sept. 24. 1708, by which his lordship, at the instance and desire of the Duke of Marl-

From the preceding narrative, it will readily appear that this noble structure would have remained a reproach to the nation, had it not owed its completion to the liberality of the hero whose services it was intended to commemorate.

Soon after his return from exile he visited the place, with the fond hopes which it was calculated to inspire. Perceiving, however, the backwardness of government in advancing the necessary supplies, he obtained an estimate from the architect, and declared his intention of finishing the building, when he was exonerated from the debts incurred prior to the suspension in 1712. He even gave orders for collecting materials ; and, when the act passed in the first year of the new sovereign had declared the crown responsible, he directed the works to be prosecuted at his own expense.

In a letter to Mrs. Clayton*, written about this period; the duchess, with her usual exaggeration and querulousness, thus describes the state of the edifice, and specifies the charges attending its construction : —

" As to the affair of this building, I will state it to you as short as I

borough, appoints Tilman Robarts, gent., comptroller of the works at Blenheim, in place of William Boulter, deceased; and to act jointly with Mr. Vanbrugh, as comptroller of the works. 3d. A letter from the Duke of Marlborough, dated Meldert, August 1707, to Sir John Vanbrugh, desiring him to proceed in the works at Blenheim with all possible dispatch, requesting, in the meantime, a sight of the drawings, and an account of the progress made in the building. 4th. A letter acknowledging the receipt of part of the drawings, and requesting others. 5th. Orders given in 1709, by the Duke and Duchess, for carrying on the house at Blenheim. 6th. Orders, 11th February, 1710, signed by the Duke of Marlborough, for finishing several apartments. 7th. A letter from the Duke, 5th Dec., 1707, stating that he could not be at Woodstock till the 20th, and expressing his hopes that the pavilion would then be covered, &c. 8th. A letter from the duchess, Nov. 2. relative to the payment of the workmen. 9th. A letter from the duchess, Nov. 4. on treating with smiths for locks and hinges. 10th. A letter from the duchess, requesting that Mr. Taylor should be enabled to pay to the use of Mr. Parker, in London, such sums as he should advance to the comptrollers for the weekly payments; and stating that Mr. Parker would run no risk, after the assurances received from the Duke of Marlborough, by the lord treasurer, that the payment of the works should be continued as before. — " From a note of such exhibits as the plaintiff in the original cause intended to prove."

* Without date, and imperfect, but evidently written in 1716, between the visit of the Duke to Blenheim and his first relapse.

can; the public has and are to pay two hundred and sixty-five thousand pounds for it. The Duke of Marlborough has paid and owes above nine thousand pounds since 1712, and we have yet nothing like a habitation for it. Of this great sum, thirty-eight thousand was paid, with the increase of the debts after the earl of Godolphin went out, before the building quite stopped; and for that sum of 38,000*l.*, it is literally true, that there is nothing done worth naming; and what I have taken out of the books does not amount to 2000*l.* Without any aggravation, there is a vast deal more to do than is done; the finishing that is done is but a trifle, and there is a great many thousand pounds wanting yet to complete what is called only the shell; besides all without doors, where there is nothing done, and is a chaos that turns one's brains but to think of it; and it will cost an immense sum to complete the causeway, and that ridiculous bridge, in which I counted 33 rooms. Four houses are to be at each corner of the bridge; but that which makes it so much prettier than London bridge is, that you may set in six rooms and look out at window into the high arch, while the coaches are driving over your head. But notwithstanding all this, Sir John has given Lord Marlborough an estimate in which he tells him all is to be complete for fifty-four thousand three hundred and eighty-one pounds; and because I can't believe that such a sum will do all, when thirty-eight thousand so lately did nothing, I am thought by him very troublesome and quite stupid."

The illness of the duke, and the tedious litigation which ensued, created such delays, that little progress was made in the work at the time of his decease. In the interim a serious misunderstanding arose between the duchess and the architect, which forms the subject of a voluminous correspondence. Vanbrugh was in consequence removed, and the direction of the building confided to other hands, under her own immediate superintendence.

Notwithstanding all the chagrin and mortification which this building had caused, it was still near the heart of Marlborough; and he left by his will 50,000*l.*, to be expended by equal instalments in five years for its completion, under the sole control of his widow. By her vigilant attention the undertaking was prosecuted with a degree of economy which is strikingly contrasted with the preceding expenditure; and she had the satisfaction of fulfilling the wishes of her deceased husband within the limited time, and for half the sum which he had charged on his estates. At her own expense she also constructed the triumphal arch which forms the entrance from Woodstock, and raised the column which bears on its summit the statue of the illustrious hero, and on its base the record of his victories and the acts of the legislature

which sanctioned the building, and settled the domain on himself, his widow, and his posterity.

From a review of the different statements, we may estimate the expenditure, on the part of the public, at 240,000*l.*, and on that of the Duke and his widow at 60,000*l.* more, making in the whole a total of 300,000*l.*

Chap. CXVII. — Death of Marlborough. — 1716–1722.

It is gratifying to follow illustrious characters into the shade of retirement, and to trace the conduct of a great man in that stage of existence when grandeur and power lose their charms, when the body is afflicted by disease, and the mind robbed of its vigour and elasticity. In such a light we now contemplate the Duke of Marlborough.

He persisted, as we have already stated, in fulfilling the duties of his official situations, and attending the sittings of parliament till within six months of his decease. The intervals of his leisure, when not passed in London, were spent at Blenheim, Holywell House, or Windsor Lodge. His habits were perfectly domestic, and did not belie the fond anxiety he had manifested while engaged in busier scenes for the society of his family and friends. His favourite and constant exercise was riding, either in a carriage or on horseback; and, whenever his health permitted, in walking round his grounds, particularly at Blenheim, where he delighted to contemplate his own creation. His amusements consisted in the company of his friends, whom he was accustomed to receive without ceremony, or in the recreation of cards. He played at ombre, basset, and picquet, sometimes with his grand-children even at commerce; but his favourite game was whist. From Miss Cairnes, afterwards Lady Blayney *,

* Miss Cairnes was the daughter of Sir Alexander Cairnes, bart., an eminent merchant in London, and afterwards resident in Ireland. The connexion between his family and that of Marlborough commenced during a visit which the Duke paid, in 1718, to General Withers, at Blackheath, where Sir Alexander had a villa. The assiduity, sound sense, and fascinating qualities of Lady Cairnes, won the esteem of the duchess, and led

who formed one of the junior circle, we learn that he was extremely attentive to the education of his grand-daughters, and occasionally witnessed, with parental fondness, their lessons in dancing and music. From the same authority we find that his recreations were varied with dramatic exhibitions, in which the younger branches of his family and their companions bore a part. Two of these were "Tamerlane," and "All for Love," which were introduced with addresses written for the occasion, lauding the achievements of the Duke, and the virtues and graces of the Duchess, in a high tone of eulogium. The prologue to "All for Love," written by the celebrated Dr. Hoadley, then bishop of Bangor, has been preserved; and the reader may, perhaps, not be displeased to peruse the strains to which the declining hero listened with pardonable complacency, even though they are little recommended by poetical merit. One peculiarity in this address deserves notice, namely, the anticipation of the period when the exploits of Marlborough would be commemorated, not in verse, but in plain prose, and in chronological order; a prediction which was evidently introduced to gratify the duchess, who was then collecting materials for the life of her husband, and affected a singular prejudice against poetical eulogy.*

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to an intimate friendship and correspondence. The duchess patronised Miss Cairnes, made her the companion of her grand-daughters, and superintended her education. She married, first, in 1724, Cadwallader, seventh Lord Blayney, by whom she had no issue; and, secondly, Colonel Murray, by whom she had several daughters. One of these espoused Viscount Clermont, and another General Cunningham.

These connexions introduced Lady Blayney to the correspondence of the late duchess of Marlborough, who was curious for information relative to the illustrious ancestor of her husband. In the latter part of her life, which was extended to the age of eighty, Lady Blayney wrote several interesting letters to the duchess and her son-in-law, which contain many valuable anecdotes relative to the latter years of John, Duke of Marlborough. From these letters, which are preserved at Blenheim, I have drawn many particulars recorded in this and other chapters.

* The reader will doubtless recollect the clause in her will leaving 1000*l.* to Glover and Mallet, the intended biographers of the Duke, in which she couples her bequest with a prohibition against inserting even a single line of verse. — See Preface, p. vii. — Ed.

PROLOGUE.

Whilst ancient dames and heroes in us live,
And scenes of love and war, we here revive,
Greater in both, in both more fortunate,
Than all that ever ages past called great,
O Marlboro'! think not wrong that I thee name,
And first do homage to thy brighter fame.

Beauty and virtue with each other strove
To move and recompense thy early love,
Beauty which Egypt's queen could never boast,
And virtue she ne'er knew, or quickly lost.
A soul so form'd and cloth'd, Heav'n must design
For such a soul, and such a form as thine;
But called from soft repose, and beauty's charms,
Thy louder fame is spoke in feats of arms,
The fabled stories of great Philip's son,
By thy great deeds, the world has seen outdone.
The Cæsars that Rome boasted, yield their bays,
And own in justice thy superior praise.
They fought, the empire of the word to gain,
But thou, to break the haughty tyrant's chain.
They fought t' enslave mankind, but thou to free
Whole nations from detested slavery.
Their guilty paths to grandeur, taught to hate
By virtue, nor to blush for being great.
This heap of stones, which Blenheim's palace frame,
Rose in this form a mon'ment to thy name
This heap of stones must crumble into sand,
But thy great name shall through all ages stand.
In Fate's dark book, I saw thy long-lived name,
And thus the certain prophecy proclaim:

One shall arise, who will thy deeds rehearse,
Not in arched roofs, or in suspected verse,
But in plain annals of each glorious year,
With pomp of truth the story shall appear.
Long after Blenheim's wall shall mouldered lie,
Or blown by winds to distant countries fly;
By him shall thy great actions all survive
And by thy name shall his be taught to live.

O cherish the remains of life — survey
Those years of glory which can ne'er decay.
Enjoy the best reward below allow'd,
The mem'ry of past actions, great and good.

We introduce also an account of the Dramatis Personæ, accompanied with a few remarks from the lively pen of

Lady Blayney, who performed the part of Serapion, the high-priest.

ALL FOR LOVE, OR THE WORLD WELL LOST.

Mark Anthony	Captain Fish (the page to the duchess).
Ventidius.....	Old Mr. Jennings.
Serapion (the high-priest)	Miss Cairnes.
Alexas	Mrs. La Vie.*
Cleopatra.....	Lady Charlotte Macarthy.
Octavia	Lady Anne Spencer.
Children of Anthony ...	Lady Anne Egerton.
	Lady Diana Spencer.

[*Scene the Bow-window Room.*] [*Great Screens for changing Scenes.*]

"The bishop of Winchester (Hoadley) writ a prologue upon the occasion, which I think I have given the Duchess of Marlborough. Miss Cairnes, as high-priest, wore a very fine surplice, that came from Holland for the chapel (no sacrilege), for the chapel was not finished many years after. What makes me call it a fine surplice is, that all the breast was worked in what, many years after, was called Dresden work. The old duke was so pleased, that we played it three times; first, because we were to play it; some time after, for Lord Winchelsea, then Lord Finch, and a great favourite there; and the third time at the duke's request. The duchess scratched out some of the most amorous speeches, and there was no embrace whatever allowed, &c. In short, no offence to the company. I suppose we made a very grand appearance; there was profusion of brocade rolls, &c., of what was to be the window-curtains at Blenheim. Jewels you may believe in plenty: and I think Mark Anthony wore the sword that the emperor gave the Duke of Marlborough."†

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* Mrs. La Vie was the daughter of a French refugee, and a relation of Lady Cairnes. She acted as governess to Miss Cairnes, afterwards Lady Blayney, who speaks in the highest terms of her good sense, knowledge, and accomplishments. She was often a guest at the petits soupers, or weekly entertainments, which Lady Darlington was accustomed to give to George the First, and where she assembled persons distinguished for their taste and literary acquirements. She was the lady who translated into French the duchess's letter to the king, mentioned in chapter 115.

† This participation of the duke in juvenile amusements reminds us of Scipio picking up shells on the sea-beach, Augustus playing with children on the floor of his apartment, and Henry IV. of France racing round his nursery, with his son astride on his back. It is recorded of the last amiable monarch, that being surprised in his playful situation by a foreign ambassador, he asked him if he was a father. On his answering in the affirmative, he added, "Well, then, we may finish our race."

In the intervals of his disorder, Marlborough enjoyed sufficient health and activity to visit his friends and relations, and even to pay his court to the prince and princess of Wales, by whom he was treated with peculiar marks of attention and regard. An account of one of these visits is preserved by the duchess, in a letter to Mrs. Clayton.

"*July* 9. 1720. — I was in great hopes to have seen you here, dear Mrs. Clayton, last night, because Mr. Clayton writ me word that you would come the end of this week. But, believing you would not set out so early as to be here at dinner, I went to Richmond to pay my duty to their royal highnesses, where the Duke of Marlborough and I had such a reception as would fill more than this paper to repeat; and I will only say, in short, that they were both very good; and the princess was so very kind to the Duke of Marlborough and to poor me, and had so many agreeable ways of expressing it, that I really love her; and whatever may be deficient in the late reconcilement, I am sure if others are treated as we were, they will never want a full court of the best sort of people that this country affords. All the attendants, from the lord chamberlain, and ladies of the bed-chamber, to the pages of the back-stairs, were so civil, that I thought myself in a new world. There was very good music, though her royal highness, I saw, thought I liked the noise of the box and dice, and contrived it so as to make me play on, when she left us in a very pretty manner. The place is wonderfully pleasant, the woods wild and charming, some part of the walks in the garden fine, and the house very handsome for any body but the heir to the crown. Mr. Neville went with us, who is more extraordinary in singing, than what he is so much commended for, that is, his skill at ombre, and that qualification pleases me mightily without any expense. As I play ill, the other entertainment is very chargeable; but as I have nobody, or but few to take care of when I am dead, I will venture to play with him and my Lord Cardigan all the time I am at Woodstock, if I can keep them so long with me.

"I have not passed a day a long time so agreeably as I did yesterday, and had full satisfaction and content, though I lost a great deal of money for one that is not in the South Sea. I must tell you one thing that will make you laugh; when Lady Charlotte went away, the princess called her back, and desired her to hold up her head, which is a thing I am teasing her about every day. You will see by all this how full I am of the princess's goodness; but, to end this head, I could not help reflecting as I went home, that if princes would use every body so well, and choose ministers in the interest of their country, and of good reputation, they might be as absolute as they pleased, without the expense of bribing the parliament."

From the state of his disorder and the consciousness of his declining strength, Marlborough anticipated his dissolution, and, in the latter period of his life, made a final disposition of his vast property.

We have already stated the contents of the will which he made in 1703, soon after the death of his only son. This testament was, however, superseded by another in 1712, just before his departure for the Continent, which was afterwards modified and amended by different codicils in 1718, 1719, and 1720. Of the execution of two of these documents, an account has been preserved by the duchess.

"I think it proper, in this place, to give some account of the Duke of Marlborough's distemper, and how he was when he signed his will. The Duke of Marlborough was taken very ill at St. Alban's, in May, 1716, with the palsy, but he recovered it so much as to go to Bath. He lived till June 15. 1722; and though he had often returns of his illness, he went many journeys, and was in all appearance well, excepting that he could not pronounce all words, which is common in that distemper, but his understanding was as good as ever. But he did not speak much to strangers, because when he was stopt, by not being able to pronounce some words, it made him uneasy. But to his friends that he was used to he would talk freely; and since his death Mr. Hanbury *, the dowager Lady Burlington, and many others of my friends, have remarked to me with pleasure, the things that they had heard him say, and the just observations he had made upon what others had said to him; and he gave many instances of remembering several things in conversation that others had forgot." * * * * *

"*Feb.* 22. 1719–20. — Upon that day the Duke of Marlborough made a codicil to his will, in which he gave my Lord Rialton a settlement during his mother's life; and in case Lord Rialton died, and she had no son, a settlement upon my Lord Spencer. He had signed this settlement about a month before; and upon making this, it was corrected. * * * * *

"The Duke of Marlborough was so impatient to sign this codicil, that he called for the witnesses two or three times before they were ready to come in to see him sign. He was so well that Dean Jones dined with him that day; and in the evening my Lord Coningsby, Doctor Hare, and Mrs. Jennings were with him. He played at cards with Dean Jones and Lady Anne Spencer; afterwards he saw my Lady Burlington, Lord Cardigan, General Lumley, and Lord Carlton, who took notice to me, as he sat by us at play, that he had not seen the Duke of Marlborough so well a long time."

Well aware of the tedious litigation which frequently arises from obscure and equivocal bequests, and knowing the plea which might possibly be drawn from his own bodily infirmities, to question his testamentary dispositions, he took particular care to obviate all objections, and give the fullest

* Major Hanbury of Ponty Pool. — See an account of him in the *Monmouthshire Tour*, chap. xxv.

proof of his competency to fulfil so solemn and important a duty. Of this transaction the duchess has also preserved a circumstantial detail: —

"I think I have already given an account of his directions to Sir Edward Northey and Sir Robert Raymond, to alter his will, when he found the necessity of doing it. They kept it a long time before it was finished, and when he signed it, which I think was in 1721, or about that time, after it had all been read over to him, he sent to the persons whom he intended to be witnesses, to dine with him at Marlborough House; my Lord Finch, General Lumley, and Dr. Clarke*, who, at my desire, had all read the will before it was signed. As soon as dinner was over, he asked if Mr. Green was come (he was Sir Edward Northey's clerk); and as soon as he came into the room, he asked him how his mother did. Upon Mr. Green's being come to put the seals to the will, the Duke of Marlborough rose from the table, and fetched it himself out of his closet; and, as he held it in his hand, he declared to the witnesses that it was his last will, that he had considered it vastly well, and was entirely satisfied with it; and then he signed every sheet of paper, and delivered it in all the forms. After this, the witnesses all sat at the table, and talked for some time. Lord Finch and Dr. Clarke went away first, about business; and when General Lumley rose up to go, who staid a good while longer than the others, who had business, the Duke of Marlborough rose up too, and went to him and embraced him, taking him by the hand and thanking him for the favour he had done him."

The Duke of Marlborough survived his testamentary arrangement above a year; and, on the 27th of November, 1721, made his last appearance in the House of Lords. He passed the winter in London, in his wonted habits, and with his usual company; and, in May, removed to Windsor Lodge. Towards the beginning of June he was again attacked with a violent paroxysm of his paralytic disorder, which resisted the customary remedies. He lay several days, fully sensible of his approaching dissolution, and retained his senses so perfectly, that on the evening before his decease, he listened to the prayers which were usually read to him; and to a question of the duchess, whether he had heard them, replied distinctly, "Yes; and I joined in them."

* The celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, rector of St. James's.

As he was then reposing on the couch, the duchess inquired whether he would not be easier on his bed; and, on his reply in the affirmative, he was removed to his apartment. Medicines were administered; the blisters which had been applied were dressed; and an inflammation in his back was fomented. His family and servants gradually withdrew, leaving the duchess and the necessary attendants in the apartment; and he lay without any symptom of immediate dissolution till four in the morning, when his strength suddenly failed, and he calmly rendered up his spirit to his Maker, in the 72d year of his age.*

His body being embalmed, was removed to Marlborough House, where it lay in state. The funeral exhibited a display of military parade and regal pomp, which has been seldom paralleled. The magnificence of the spectacle was heightened by a vast concourse of spectators, from all the provinces of the three kingdoms, who poured forth their multitudes to join the inhabitants of the capital, in celebrating the obsequies of the first and most renowned among their heroes.

The procession was opened by bands of military, accompanied by a detachment of artillery, in the rear of which followed Lord Cadogan, commander-in-chief, and several general officers, who had been devoted to the person of the duke, and had suffered in his cause. Amidst long files of heralds, officers-at-arms, mourners, and assistants, the eye was caught by the banners and guidons emblazoned with his armorial achievements, among which was displayed, on a lance, the standard of Woodstock, exhibiting the arms of France on the cross of St. George.†

In the centre of the cavalcade was an open car, bearing the coffin, which contained his mortal remains, surmounted

* Lediard says, that he died in his 73d year; the French biographer, more truly, "près de soixante-douze ans;" for he was born on the 22d of June, 1650, and, consequently, had not completed his 72d year. The duchess erroneously states him to have died on the 15th of June, (see p. 421.) whereas he died on the 16th, at four in the morning.

† The standard is annually presented to the crown by the possessor of Blenheim, and a long array of such territorial acknowledgments continues to be preserved at Windsor Castle. It is by the same feudal tenure of grand sergeantry, and the annual presentment of a flag, that the Duke of Wellington holds the estate of Strathfieldsaye. — Ed.

with a suit of complete armour, and laying under gorgeous canopy, adorned with plumes, military trophies, and heraldic achievements. To the sides, shields were affixed, exhibiting emblematic representations of the battles he had gained, and the towns he had conquered, with the motto, "*Bello, hæc et plura.*" On either side were five captains in military mourning, bearing aloft a series of bannerols, charged with the different quarterings of the Churchill and Jennings families.

The duke of Montague, who acted as chief mourner, was supported by the earls of Sunderland and Godolphin, and assisted by eight dukes and two earls. Four earls were also selected to bear the pall. The procession was closed by a numerous train of carriages, belonging to the nobility and gentry, headed by those of the king and the prince of Wales.

The cavalcade moved along St. James's Park to Hyde Park Corner, and from thence through Piccadilly and Pall Mall, by Charing Cross, to Westminster Abbey. At the west door it was received by the dignitaries and members of the church, in their splendid habiliments; and the venerable pile blazed with tapers and torches innumerable. When the necessary arrangements were completed, the choir opened the service with the introductory sentence, "I am the resurrection and the life." The procession then moved through the nave and choir to the chapel of Henry VII., where the remainder of the funeral office was read by Bishop Atterbury, as dean of Westminster, whose impressive delivery gave additional solemnity to the most pathetic portion of our liturgy. The body was lowered into the vault, at the east end of the tomb of Henry VII.*; and, at the close of the service, the ceremony was concluded by garter-king-of-arms, who, advancing to the verge of the grave, recited the various titles and honours of the deceased, and pronounced the awful proclamation, "Thus it has pleased Almighty God to take out of this transitory world, into his mercy, the most high, mighty, and noble prince, John, Duke of Marlborough."†

* From the communication of the Rev. Dr. Ireland, dean of Westminster.

† It has been generally supposed that the charges of this sumptuous

This solemn ceremonial was, however, performed merely to render national honours to the remains of the great commander; for his body was not long suffered to repose in this ancient receptacle of royalty, but removed to the chapel at Blenheim, where it was finally deposited, in a magnificent mausoleum, executed by Rysbrack, under the superintendence of the duchess.

The Duke of Marlborough died immensely rich, as is evident from his testamentary bequests.

He bequeathed to his widow a jointure of 15,000*l.* per annum, free of all charges and deductions, with the option of changing the 5000*l.* from the Post Office, for an annuity of the same amount on his property, from the just motive, that the public grant should devolve on the person who succeeded to his title. She was also empowered to dispose of 10,000*l.* annually, for the space of five years, in the completion of the works at Blenheim; and the purchase of estates, or any other investment of his personal property, was subjected to her approbation, in concurrence with that of Lady Godolphin and Lord Rialton. As the manor of Woodstock and the mansion of Blenheim were already settled on her by act of parliament, the terms of the bequest indicate no less his wish that she should be considered as his representative, than the gratitude which he invariably expressed for her affection and tenderness.

"'And whereas, in and by my said hereinbefore recited will, I give to my said wife and her assigns, during the term of her natural life, the sum of 10,000*l.* per annum, clear of taxes; and whereas, my personal estate is since greatly increased, and my said wife has been very tender and careful of me, and had great trouble with me during my illness, and I intending for the consideration aforesaid, and out of the tender affection, great respect, and gratitude which I have and bear to her, and for the better support of her title and honour, to increase her said annuity 5000*l.* a year," &c.

The duchess was authorised to dispose of her own personal property, and to bequeath her paternal estate at Sandridge

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funeral were defrayed by the crown; but the duchess asserts that they were borne by herself, and her statement is confirmed by Lady Blayney, in a letter to the late duchess, as well as by Lediard. At my request the dean of Westminster kindly ordered a search of the chapter books, to ascertain this point; but no evidence appears to prove by whom the fees and other expenses were paid.

to any of her grandchildren at discretion; but the mansion of Marlborough House, of which the site had been granted to her by the crown, she was requested to leave to the successor in the title. The service of gold plate presented to the duke by the elector of Hanover, and the diamond sword, which was the gift of the emperor Charles, together with the insignia of the garter, were bequeathed as heir-looms to Lord Rialton; but the rest of the plate and jewels were devised to the duchess.

The residue of his property, after the payment of different legacies to his younger daughter and grand-children, was devised to his eldest daughter, Henrietta, countess of Godolphin, and her heirs male, with a reversionary entail on the male issue of his other daughters. In failure of issue male, the succession was to revert in the same order to the female line.

To Lord Godolphin an annuity of 5000*l.* a year was assigned, if he survived his wife; and to their eldest son, Lord Rialton, heir apparent, an allowance of 3000*l.* per annum, which was to be increased to 8000*l.* when the works at Blenheim were finished; and to 20,000*l.* on the death of the duchess dowager. A similar provision was made for the presumptive heir of the Sunderland line, should Lord Rialton die without issue male; and, on the eventual succession of the earl of Sunderland to the title of Marlborough and the possession of the Blenheim estates, he was required to relinquish his paternal inheritance in favour of his younger brother or brothers.

Lastly, we ought not to omit a singular clause which proves the anxiety of the noble testator to maintain the dignity of the titles he had required for his posterity; for he enjoined his executors to obtain from the legislature an act for settling on his future representative all the landed estates which, at subsequent periods, might be purchased with the principal or interest of his personal property.

The trustees appointed by the will were Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough; his three sons-in-law, the dukes of Montagu and Bridgewater, and Lord Godolphin; William Guydot, William Clayton, and John Hanbury, of Ponty Pool, Esquires.*

* Will of John Duke of Marlborough, and various extracts and memoranda in the handwriting of the Duchess.

On the decease of the duke, the title and honours descended to his eldest daughter, Henrietta. Her son, William, became marquis of Blandford, but died in 1731, in the thirty-third year of his age, leaving no issue by a marriage which he had contracted with a Dutch lady of the family of De Jong, of Utrecht.* On the death of Henrietta, therefore, which happened in 1733, the title and honours passed to the Sunderland line. Robert, the eldest son of Anne, countess of Sunderland, having died in 1729, Charles, his next brother, fourth earl of Sunderland, succeeded to the dukedom of Marlborough, and, in 1744, became possessor of Blenheim and all the estates, on the demise of the duchess dowager. In conformity with the will of his grandfather, he relinquished his paternal property and mansion of Althorpe to his brother John, who was founder of the second Spencer line. To him Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, also left her own paternal estates, and the property accumulated during her long widowhood, which rendered him no less opulent than the representative of the elder branch.

From Charles, earl of Sunderland and duke of Marlborough, George, the present duke, is lineally descended; and, in testimony of respect for the memory of his illustrious ancestor, he has assumed the name and arms of Churchill in conjunction with those of Spencer. From John, the second son, the present Earl Spencer likewise derives his origin in lineal descent.

Henrietta, duchess of Marlborough, by her husband, Francis, earl of Godolphin, left two daughters. Henrietta, the elder, espoused Thomas Holles, duke of Newcastle; Mary, the younger, espoused Thomas, duke of Leeds; and from her is descended George, the present and sixth duke of Leeds.

Mary, the fourth daughter of John Duke of Marlborough, espoused John, duke of Montagu, by whom she had three sons, John, George, and Edward Churchill, who all died in infancy, and three daughters, of whom the second, Eleanor, died unmarried. Isabella, the eldest, who espoused, first, William, duke of Manchester, was celebrated as the most beautiful woman of her age, and is the subject of the animated poem by Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, enti-

* She espoused in second nuptials Sir William Windham.

tled, "Isabella, or the Morning." By the duke she had no issue. She married, secondly, Edward Hussey, Esq., who, on the death of his father-in-law, assumed the name and arms of Montagu, was created successively baron and Earl Beaulieu, and expired in 1802. Their only son, John, was born in 1747, assumed the title of Lord Montagu, and died in 1787. A daughter, Isabella, born in 1750, died in 1772.

Mary, the youngest daughter, of John, duke of Montagu, married George Brudenell, fourth earl of Cardigan, who, in 1766, was created duke of Montagu.* Their only son, John, marquis of Monthermer, was born in 1735, and died unmarried in 1770; and their surviving daughter, Elizabeth, espousing Henry, late duke of Buccleugh, became the fruitful mother of a line of descendants from John, Duke of Marlborough.†

Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, long survived her illustrious husband. Though at the age of sixty-two when she became a widow, she still possessed sufficient attractions to captivate Lord Coningsby and the duke of Somerset, who both made her proposals of marriage in the first and second year of her widowhood. An epistle of Lord Coningsby is preserved, which breathes all the despondency of a love-sick shepherd; and another from the duke of Somerset, in which the high-minded peer expatiates with great fervour on his long and respectful passion, lays his fortune and person at her feet, and implores her hand, to console him for the loss of his deceased wife.‡

* George, duke of Montagu, was, in 1786, created Baron Montagu, with remainder in failure of his heirs-male to Lord Henry James Montagu, second son of his daughter, Elizabeth, duchess of Buccleugh.

† The French biographer, besides the legitimate issue, bestows on the Duke of Marlborough several natural sons, one of whom, he says, was father of General Churchill, who distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy. We find, however, no traces of such a progeny; and, unfortunately for his accuracy, the officer in question proves to have been the grandson of Charles Churchill, the brother of the duke. His father had previously signalised himself at the battle of Ramilies, and he forms one of the humorous characters in Sir Charles Hanbury Williams's poem of "Isabella, or the Morning."

‡ Letter from Lord Coningsby to the duchess of Marlborough, and Correspondence between her grace and the duke of Somerset.

The letter from Lord Coningsby was written in the latter end of 1722, and that from the duke of Somerset, July 17. 1723.

The reply of the duchess to the duke of Somerset was highly dignified, and worthy of her regard to the memory of her husband. She not only declined a connexion so unsuitable at her age, but declared that if she were only thirty, she would not permit even the emperor of the world to succeed in that heart, which had been devoted to John Duke of Marlborough. The disappointed peer was so affected with her candour and spirit, as to solicit her advice in the choice of a wife; and to espouse Lady Charlotte Finch, whom she recommended. Their friendship continued through life; and the duchess often availed herself of his judgment, in the disposal of money, and the purchase of landed property.

She survived the Duke of Marlborough twenty-two years, and died in 1744, at the age of 84. *

Chap. CXVIII. — Character of the Duke of Marlborough.

The actions and correspondence of the Duke of Marlborough furnish the best illustration of his character; but we cannot close a narrative, in the composition of which we have felt no less pleasure than interest, without a few concluding remarks on the leading peculiarities of his mind, as well as on those habits and dispositions, which are least known and least developed.

As a private individual, he possessed the domestic virtues in an eminent degree. He was a dutiful and obedient son, a tender husband, an affectionate father, a firm friend, and an indulgent master. The temper and forbearance which he manifested towards the wayward fancies and petulant humour of his duchess, are almost unexampled; and his indulgence is the more laudable, as we discover few instances in which his conjugal fondness interfered with his political duties. His kindness towards his children is no less shown, in his invariable attention to their welfare during their early years; and in his liberality and care for their establishment in their more mature age. Above all, the highest illustra-

* Appendix, note K.

tion of his character as a father and husband was, his affectionate caution during the incessant bickerings, which occurred towards the decline of his life, between his two surviving daughters and their mother, where great blame was justly attributable to both parties, and where he was involved in a continual struggle between inclination and duty. Without belying his affection to either, he was not insensible to their faults and failings; and in his testamentary bequests, evinced his impartiality and liberality to all.

Many proofs might be adduced of the steadiness, as well as warmth of his friendship, but none is more striking than his invariable attachment to Lord Godolphin. Assured of his integrity and abilities, he gave him his whole support, and full confidence; and disdained to sacrifice his faithful colleague, not merely on the trite plea of political expediency, but even for the most weighty considerations of power and emolument. To the fears and prejudices of this zealous and upright, but often narrow-minded statesman, he yielded, what he denied to conjugal importunity, and, in many instances, relinquished his own better judgment to the limited views and suggestions of his friend.

The endowments and virtues of so extraordinary a mind were combined and embellished with no less distinguished graces of person and manner. He was above the middle stature, well formed, and active in bodily exercises. His countenance was unusually pleasing, his features regular, but manly; his eye penetrating and expressive. His demeanour was graceful, dignified, and captivating; and no man possessed, in a higher degree, the art of conciliation. His very denials were tempered with such gentleness and complacency, that even the applicants who were least satisfied, in regard to the object of their solicitations, could not quit him without being charmed by his deportment. He was, indeed, a finished courtier; but the polish of his manners was derived rather from nature than from art. It was the operation of inherent humility, united with a sweetness and amenity of temper, which seldom enters into the composition of a hero. This amiable peculiarity was not visible merely in social intercourse, but appears in all his correspondence, and is traced in all his actions. Lord Chancellor Cowper, who knew him well, describes him as a master of the most

winning address; and Lord Chesterfield adduces him as a model of perfection in the art of pleasing. *

He was equally regular and exemplary in the performance of moral and religious duties. The principles which he had imbibed in his early years were indelibly impressed on his mind; and in courts and camps, as well as in domestic life, he exhibited the same pious confidence in the protection of an over-ruling Providence. He was a firm believer in the truths of the Christian Revelation, and zealously attached to the doctrines of the Established Church. Hence he was punctual in his attendance on the divine offices, a frequent communicant, and manifested a devotion, fervent, but calm, and no less remote from enthusiasm than from indifference.

Though brought up in a licentious court, and seduced, in his youth, by evil example, he maintained an inviolable respect for the nuptial union. From the time of his marriage with the object of his affections, he resisted every temptation of courts and camps; and, amidst all the calumnious imputations which have been heaped on his memory, the aggravated malice of his political adversaries has never thrown the slightest suspicion on his conjugal fidelity.

The operation of these principles was not only felt in his own conduct, but extended their influence to his family, and to all who were subject to his authority. He was never known to utter an indecent word, or to give an example of levity. He even severely reproved those who presumed to offend his ears with loose expressions, and resented them, both as a personal affront, and as an act of immorality.† He discountenanced the slightest degree of intemperance or licentiousness, and laboured to impress his officers and troops with the same sense of religion which he himself entertained. Divine service was regularly performed in all his fixed camps, both morning and evening; and, on Sundays, sermons were preached, both in field and garrison. Previous to a battle, prayers were offered up at the head of each regiment; and the first act, after a victory, was a solemn thanksgiving. By these means, aided by his own example, "his camp," to use the words of his biographer, who served under him, "re-

* Lord Cowper's Diary, and Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son.

† From Lord Cobham, who served under him during so many campaigns.

sembled a quiet, well-governed city. Cursing and swearing were seldom heard among the officers; a sot and a drunkard was the object of scorn; and the poor soldiers, many of them the refuse and dregs of the nation, became at the close of one or two campaigns, tractable, civil, sensible, and clean, and had an air and spirit above the vulgar."*

A leading feature in the character of the Duke of Marlborough was his generous magnanimity. Sincere himself, he disdained to suspect others; and, in all his actions and correspondence, he manifests that lofty confidence which is the attribute of elevated minds. A striking instance of this spirit occurs in a letter to the duchess, who, at an early period, had hinted her suspicions of the duke of Shrewsbury. "If he be an ill man," he observes, "he has it in his power to do a great deal of hurt; but I am of the humour not to believe the hundredth part of what is said of any body, so that I may easily be imposed upon." In no case, indeed, was this more strongly exemplified than in his conduct towards Harley, and in the pertinacity with which he long resisted every proof of the treachery of a man whom he considered as bound to him by gratitude.

Human nature, however, is not perfect; and it is with regret we acknowledge that one virtue was wanting in the Duke of Marlborough, which we naturally attach to the character of a great man. This was, a want of liberality, which, in him, amounted to parsimony. He was thus enabled to raise a fortune, which few subjects have ever realised, and to render his family no less distinguished for opulence than for honours. It is but justice, however, to add, that this principle of rigid economy was derived from his originally scanty means, his early marriage, and numerous family, and observed from necessity, till it degenerated into habit. It is no less just to remark, that it operated chiefly in his private capacity; for, in his loans to government, in his buildings and improvements, and in transactions of a public nature, no man was more munificent. Of this assertion, ample proof is derived from the splendid mansions of Holywell and Marlborough houses†, the expensive improvements at Windsor Lodge, and the completion of Blenheim.

* Lediard, vol. i. Preface, p. 20.

† From a memorandum of the duchess, we learn that Marlborough House alone did not cost him less than 70,000*l.*

But his private qualities, however eminent, were far surpassed by his excellences as a public character. His exploits as a general have so far monopolised attention, that due justice has not been rendered to his merits as a statesman. In that capacity, however, he occupied a prominent place; for in the cabinet, when unfettered by the views or prejudices of party, he displayed the same skill, discernment, and decision as in the field. On him rested, for several years, the political system, not only of his own country, but of Europe; and the ease with which he appeared to direct the vast and complicated machine is no less wonderful than his most stupendous victories. In application and industry he was unparalleled; and he was equally master of the minutest details of domestic government, as of the profoundest combinations of policy. Of this, his extensive correspondence, still remaining, is a striking instance, and verifies his own observation, in one of his letters to Lord Oxford, that the pen was seldom out of his hand. Indeed, when we contemplate the vast mass of his official and private letters, we can scarcely believe, that the same hand and mind which directed the military and political energies of Europe could have been equal to the mere mechanical labour of such incessant drudgery. It would be an endless task to review the details of his conduct as a statesman; but the preceding pages will exhibit innumerable instances, to contrast his sound sense, enlarged views, and able policy, with the petty interests of the Dutch and Austrian governments, and even the narrow views of his own cabinet.

As a senator, his conduct was marked by manly integrity and spirit, tempered with caution and prudence. He took little share in discussions, which were beyond the sphere of his knowledge or practice; but on subjects of foreign and military policy, his opinions were heard with the greatest attention, and produced a decisive effect. He was not a frequent speaker; but his manner evinced peculiar dignity and courtesy; his language was simple and forcible, his matter well arranged, and his arguments perspicuous and conclusive. He did not affect the graces of oratory; yet, when warmed with his subject, his language breathed a degree of feeling and energy beyond the reach of art.

We should be happy to exhibit his political career as free

from blemish, but it is not without regret that we revert to his clandestine correspondence with the exiled family, to whose expulsion he so much contributed. Though some palliation might be drawn from example, circumstances, and personal considerations, and though we are convinced that his overtures were merely amusive; it is a duplicity which we must unequivocally condemn, and a blot in an escutcheon, otherwise so honourably distinguished. But it would be no less uncharitable than impolitic, to drag such failings into light, when they are so fully redeemed by a long series of able counsels and splendid achievements, for the liberties and religion of his country, and for the welfare and independence of Europe. The citizens of Rome did not reject the appeal of Scipio to his victories; and, if we judge the Duke of Marlborough by actions, not by words, he must stand excused by every feeling of candour and patriotism.

As a warrior, the merits of the Duke of Marlborough, though uncontested, have never been sufficiently developed. Little favoured by education and science, he supplied the want of knowledge by observation and reflection. He fully profited by his brief experience, under so able a master as Turenne; and, after a short campaign in the Netherlands, and the uncontrolled direction of a petty expedition to Ireland, he rose at once a general, and in his first operations, proved himself equal, if not superior, to the ablest of his contemporaries. With limited, and often inadequate means, he accomplished the greatest objects; infused harmony, union, and strength into a heterogeneous mass of different nations; and might have stood still higher in the ranks of fame, had he not been harassed by the petty passions of those with whom he was connected in command, and thwarted by the partial interests, and limited views, of the powers whose advantage he was labouring to promote. With all these obstructions, however, he may claim the merit of having humbled France in the height of her power, and routed her disciplined armies; of having gained every battle in which he engaged, and reduced every fortress which he undertook to besiege.

His genius was of English mould, vast, comprehensive, and daring, attaining its purposes by great and decided efforts, simple in design, and majestic in execution.

Averse, by character as well as principle, from defensive warfare, he was always the assailant, and invariably pursued one grand object, regardless of minor considerations. He conquered, not by chance, or the unskilfulness of his antagonists; but by superior vigilance and activity, by the profoundness of his combinations, by the celerity of his movements, and by the promptitude and decision of his attacks. These qualities are fully exemplified in every part of his military career; but more particularly in his march to the Danube, his operations on the Moselle, his battles of Blenheim, Ramilies, and Oudenard, and, above all, in his fine campaign of 1711.

He possessed a perfect knowledge of ground, and consummate skill in the choice of positions. He was also well acquainted with the character and spirit of his troops; and the familiar appellation of "Corporal John," as well as the reliance they invariably expressed on his vigilance and care, evince the love and confidence with which he inspired them.

With these sublime qualities of a great commander, he united endurance of fatigue and hardship, the most perfect presence of mind, and inexhaustible fertility of resource. He was, at the same time, patient under contradiction, and placid both in manners and deportment; and the harmony in which he acted with his colleague, Eugene, proves at once the liberality of his sentiments and his freedom from the spirit of rivalry and competition. But no feature in his character was more shining and conspicuous than his humanity. Not only the troops who had promoted his glory and shared his dangers, but the enemy whom his sword had spared, invariably experienced his sympathy and benevolence. He was feared as a general, but he was loved as a man. No one was more alive to the sufferings and privations of his troops; nor did any conqueror more sincerely feel for the horrors and devastation of war. He frequently gave the weary soldier a place in his coach; and after the most desperate battles his earliest care was to visit the field, to comfort the wounded, and to lighten the sufferings of misfortune and captivity.

A leading feature in his character, both public and private, was his unparalleled self-possession, though, as we have before seen, he had to struggle against a temper naturally

ardent and irritable. Indeed, in him this virtue is so conspicuous, that he has been adduced by Adam Smith as a striking example in illustration of his Theory of Moral Sentiments. After adverting to the overweening vanity of the great and wise in different ages, he adds: —

"The religion and manners of modern times give our great men little encouragement to fancy themselves gods, or even prophets. Success, however, joined to great popular favour, has often so far turned the heads of them, as to make them ascribe to themselves both an importance and an ability much beyond what they really possessed; and by this presumption to precipitate themselves into many rash, and even ruinous adventures. It is a characteristic almost peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterupted and such splendid successes as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarce into a single rash word or expression. The same temperate coolness and self-command cannot, I think, be ascribed to any great warrior of later times; not to Prince Eugene, nor to the late king of Prussia; not to the great prince of Condé, not even to Gustavus Adolphus. Turenne seems to have approached the nearest to it, but several different actions of his life sufficiently demonstrate that it was in him by no means so perfect as in the great Duke of Marlborough."*

Finally, the best proof of transcendent merit is the testimony of an enemy, and this testimony is not wanting. For when the heat of party resentment had subsided, his inveterate persecutor, Lord Bolingbroke, paid a public and dignified tribute to his memory in his Letters on the Study of History: —

"By his (King William's) death, the Duke of Marlborough was raised to the head of the army, and, indeed, of the confederacy, where he, a private man, a subject, obtained by merit and by management a more decided influence than high birth, confirmed authority, and even the crown of Great Britain had given to King William. Not only all the parts of that vast machine, the grand alliance, were kept more compact and entire, but a more rapid and vigorous

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, chap. iv., on the Character of Virtue, vol. ii., p. 158.

motion was given to the whole ; and, instead of languishing or disastrous campaigns, we saw every scene of the war full of action. All those wherein he appeared, and many of those wherein he was not then an actor, but abettor, however, of their action, were crowned with the most triumphant success. I take, with pleasure, this opportunity of doing justice to that great man, whose faults I knew, and whose virtues I admired; and whose memory, AS THE GREATEST GENERAL, AND AS THE GREATEST MINISTER that our country or any other has produced, I honour."*

* This character of the Duke of Marlborough was not printed till after the death of Lord Bolingbroke; though it was submitted to the duchess, at her request, as we find from a letter in the handwriting of Mr. Mallet.

"Your grace will find in the next leaf that character you was pleased to desire a sight of some time ago. As the book from whence it is taken has not yet appeared, your grace will be so good as to let it lie by you, without showing it; and you will have the satisfaction to know that this character, never intended for your grace's perusal, is without partiality or flattery. I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard, &c.

"*Strand on the Green, Friday.*"

The signature is torn off, apparently by the duchess, to conceal the name of the writer.

APPENDIX.

Copy *of the Royal Warrant of his Majesty King George the First, relative to the* **Standard** *or* **Colours,** *belonging to the Honour and Manor of* **Woodstock,** *to be borne at the Funeral of his Grace* **John Duke of Marlborough.**

GEORGE R.

Whereas in and by an Act of Parliament made in the 3rd and 4th years of the reign of our late dear sister Queen Anne, in respect of the eminent and unparalleled services performed by the most noble John Duke of Marlborough, now lately deceased, and, among others, in particular for attacking and forcing the Bavarians, assisted by the French, in their strong intrenchment at Schellenberg, and for gaining a glorious victory over the enemies, reinforced by a royal army of the French King's best troops, commanded by a marshal of France, at or near Blenheim, on the 2d of August, 1704; it was enacted, in order to perpetuate the memory of such signal services, that the said late Queen might, by Letters Patent, grant to the said Duke, his Heirs and Assigns, the Honour and Manor of Woodstock, and other Lands therein mentioned, to be held of the Crown, in Fee and Common Soccage by Fealty, rendering on the 2d of August in every year for ever, one Standard or Colour of three Flower de Luces painted thereupon, in pursuance whereof, her said late Majesty granted Letters Patent accordingly.

And though the said Act fully intimates that the said Standard or Colours shall be annually presented for ever on the 2nd day of August, in order to perpetuate the memory of that glorious victory, obtained over the then enemies, reinforced by a royal army of the French King's troops, on the 2nd day of August; yet, in regard, the said Act and the said Letters Patent thereon, do not direct the Blazon of the said Fleurs de Lis, or on what Field they shall be borne, you, our Principal King of Arms, have, as we are informed, humbly requested our commands in that particular. We being desirous that the Funeral of the said Duke should be solemnized with all the circumstances of honour that his high merits have deserved, do hereby signify our will and pleasure, and direct and command you, that in the said Funeral you shall set forth the said Standard or Colours of the three Fleurs de Lis in the following method, that is to say, Azure three Fleurs de Lis Or, in a Shield, placed by way of an Inescutcheon on the Cross of St. George, according to the Draught

hereunto annexed, to be borne either in a Shield, Standard, or Banner, as belonging to the Honour and Manor of Woodstock.

At which said Funeral you are also to use, or cause to be used, all such Ensigns that appertain to the said late deceased Duke, as a Prince of the Sacred Roman Empire, together with the Banner of the Garter, which, instead of the Images of Saints, we hereby appoint and direct, shall be the Cross of the said Order, impaling the arms of the said late Duke, with an Inescutcheon thereon of the Arms of the Duchess, all surrounded with a Garter, and surmounted with a Ducal Coronet; all which said Ensigns are to be used and borne, as well within the verge of our Court, as in all other places at the solemnization of the said Funeral, wherein John Duke of Montagu, the Chief Mourner, is to be supported by Scroop Duke of Bridgewater and the Earl of Godolphin, any former Orders or Rules given about Funerals notwithstanding.

And forasmuch as by another Act of Parliament, passed in the 5th year of the said late Queen, it was further enacted that the Honours and Dignities of the said most noble Duke of Marlborough be settled upon all his Posterity, in the manner therein mentioned, and that the Honour and Manor of Woodstock, the House of Blenheim, with other Lands, be annexed and go along with the said Honours and Dignities; it is our will and pleasure, and we hereby direct and command you, and your Successors in the office of our Garter Principal King of Arms, at all times, and all proper occasions, to set forth and blazon the Standard or Colours belonging to the Honour and Manor of Woodstock in the form above mentioned. And for all these purposes this shall be to you and them a sufficient Warrant. Given at our Court at Kensington, the 19th day of July, 1722, in the eighth year of our Reign.

By His Majesty's Command.
(*Signed*) CARTERET.

To our Trusty and Well-beloved John Antis, Esquire, Garter Principal King of Arms, and to his Successors in that Office.

The above is a true Copy of the original Warrant, now remaining among the Archives of the College of Arms, London, and examined therewith by me,

(*Signed*) GEORGE NAYLER, York Herald, Genealogist of the Bath.

Herald's College, London,
June 30. 1818.

APPENDIX

OF

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By the Editor.

(H. p. 20.) — Dr. Sacheverell's Trial.

A side-scene, almost as interesting as that described in open court, was going on behind the curtain, screened by which the queen sat to hear the trial. Mr. Coxe has left out this part of the performance, though an account of it is preserved in the Coxe MSS. in the British Museum, and which the industry of Mrs. Thomson (*Memoirs of the Duchess*, ii. 169.), has hunted out in a letter addressed by the duchess to Mr. Hutchinson. The extract is rather long, but it is well worth perusing, both from the light it throws on the intrigues and manners of the times, and the causes that produced the final rupture between the favourite and her majesty. The duchess is summing up her imaginary offences.

"This was at Dr. Sacheverell's trial, where I waited on the queen the first time she went thither, and having stood above two hours, said to the vice-chamberlain, that when the queen went to any place *incognito* (as she went to the trial, and only looked from behind a curtain), it was always the custom of the ladies to sit down before her; but her majesty had forgot to speak to us now, and that since the trial was like to continue very long every day, I wished he would put the queen in mind of it; to which he replied, very naturally, 'Why, madam, should you not speak to the queen yourself, who are always in waiting?'

"This, I knew, was right, and therefore I went up to the queen, and, stooping down to her, as she was sitting, to whisper to her, said, 'I believed her majesty had forgot to order us to sit, as was customary in such cases.' Upon this, she looked, indeed, as if she had forgot, and was sorry for it, and answered, in a very kind, easy way, 'By all means, pray sit;' and before I could go a step from her chair, she called to Mr. Mordaunt, the page of honour, to bring stools, and desire the ladies to sit down, which, accordingly, we did — Lady Scarborough, Lady Burlington, and myself. But as I was to sit nearest to the queen, I took care to place myself a good distance from her; though it was usual, in such cases, to sit close to her, and sometimes at the basset table, when she does not ap-

pear *incognito;* but in a place of ceremony the company has sat so near her as scarcely to leave her room to put her hand to her pocket. Besides this, I used a further caution of showing her all the respect I could in this matter, by drawing a curtain behind me in such a manner, betwixt her and me, as to appear to be, as it were, in a different room from her majesty. But my Lady Hyde, who stood behind the queen when I went to speak to her (and who, I observed, with an air of boldness more than good breeding, came up then nearer, to hear what I said), continued to stand still in the same manner, and never came to sit with us the rest of that day, which I then took for nothing more than making a show of more than ordinary favour with the queen.

"The next day the duchess of Somerset came to the trial, and before I sat down I turned to her, having always used to show her a great deal of respect, and asked her if her grace would not be pleased to sit; at which she gave a sort of start back, with the appearance of being surprised, as if she thought I had asked a very strange thing, and refused sitting. Upon this, I observed that it was always the custom to sit before the queen in such cases, and that her majesty had ordered us to do so the day before; but that her refusing it now looked as if she thought that we had done something that was not proper. To which she answered that she did not care to sit, and then went and stood behind the queen, as Lady Hyde had done the day before, which I took no notice of then, but sat down with Lady Burlington, as we had done before. But when I came to reflect upon what these two ladies had done, I plainly perceived that, in the duchess of Somerset, especially, this conduct could not be thought to be the effect of humility; but that it must be a stratagem that they had formed in their cabal to flatter the queen, by paying her more respect, and to make some public noise of this matter that might be to my disadvantage or disagreeable to me. And this I was still the more confirmed in, because it had been known before that the duchess of Somerset, who was then with her lord, did act a cunning part between the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. The Whigs and Tories did not intend to come to the trial. As, therefore, it was my business to keep all things as quiet as possible till the campaign was over, and preserve myself in the meanwhile, if I could, from any possible affront, I resolved to do what I could to disappoint these ladies in their little design; and in order to this, I waited upon the queen the next morning she went to the trial, and told her that I had observed the day before that the duchess of Somerset had refused to sit at the trial, which I did not know the meaning of, since her majesty was pleased to order it, and that it was nothing more than was agreeable to the constant practice of the court in all such cases; but, however, if it would in any respect be more pleasing to her majesty that we should stand for the future, I begged she would let me know her mind about it, because I should be very sorry to do any thing that could give her the least dissatisfaction. To this she answered, with more peevishness than was natural to her, in these words: — '*If I had not liked you should sit, why should I have ordered it?*'

"This plainly showed that the cabal had been blowing her up, but that she could not have us contradict her own orders. What she had now said

was a still further confirmation of it, and made it more difficult for the cabal to proceed any further in this matter; and, therefore, the next day the duchess of Ormond and Lady Fretchwell came to the trial, and, to my great surprise, sat down amongst the rest of us. And thus this matter ended; only that the duchess of Somerset used some little arts afterwards, which are not worth mentioning, to sweeten me again, and cover her design, which I supposed now she was ashamed of."

(I. p. 336.) Peace of Utrecht.

Mr. Coxe is very decided in his reprobation of the peace of Utrecht, but somewhat partial in his view of the question. It certainly rendered almost fruitless the great victories of Marlborough, but England never purposed any great advantage to herself from the war, and it was almost indifferent to her whether Austria or France was aggrandised by the accession of the Spanish monarchy. In clandestinely entering upon a separate treaty with the common enemy, before the main object of the confederacy had been accomplished, England seemed justly obnoxious to the reproach of treachery to the allies; but various circumstances may be alleged in extenuation. First, by the allies having long failed to furnish their stipulated quotas towards carrying on the war, the burthen was unfairly thrown on England. Secondly, the object of the war itself had changed during its progress. In consequence of the death of the emperor, Joseph, and the election of his brother, the Archduke Charles, to be emperor, the consolidation of the Spanish monarchy with the empire had become as perilous to the balance of power in Europe, as the union of the crowns of France and Spain. Thirdly, it had been clearly manifested that a French, not an Austrian prince, was the choice of the Spanish people. Fourthly, France was humbled, if not subdued by her reverses; she was no longer dangerous, and the terms she offered appeared satisfactory guarantees against future disturbing encroachments. Lastly, England had ceased to have — if she ever had — any interest in the war. Its continuance might win for the Dutch a stronger barrier of fortresses in the Netherlands, or the Emperor might make further acquisitions on the Rhine, but this country had hardly any thing to gain or desire. Louis XIV. acknowledged the Protestant settlement by the exile of the pretender; and though Philip was left master of Spain, both he and his grandfather were ready to offer a solemn renunciation of its junction under one head with France. By this last settlement, the danger was averted, though the ostensible principle of the Grand Alliance, namely, the exclusion of a Bourbon prince from the Spanish throne, was not literally consummated.

(J. p. 336.) Death of Queen Anne.

Queen Anne's death seems to have been hastened by the broils of her ministers. After acting in concert to overthrow the Whigs and Marlborough, Harley and Bolingbroke became jealous of each other, and bitter competitors in their efforts to obtain ascendency in the government. The secretary had insinuated himself into the confidence of Lady Masham, whom Oxford had offended; and sought to convert the author of his rival's elevation into an instrument of his disgrace. The queen had inclined to the more bold and plausible course of St. John, especially as the supple secretary had not hesitated to join in her dislike of the Hanover family, and preference of her brother, the pretender. They had become so exasperated against each other, that they could not refrain from the most violent altercations in the royal presence. For a moment Bolingbroke appeared to have reached the summit of his ambition by the fall of his opponent. The reasons assigned by the queen for Oxford's dismissal, were his want of truth and punctuality, and "the bad manners, indecency, and disrespect" with which he had treated her. But the death of Anne three days after made the secretary's triumph short-lived; and frustrated, by the promptitude of the Whigs in carrying out the Protestant settlement, all his wiles, either for the restoration of the Stuarts, or the perpetuation of his power under the electoral dynasty.

Mr. Coxe dismisses Queen Anne without any strictures on her character, or even specific notice of her death. She was quite upset by the indecorous scene in the cabinet on the 27th, and declared to an attendant that "she should never survive it." Her presentiment was right, for she sank into a stupor on the 29th, from which she only recovered sufficiently to signify her approval of the nomination of Shrewsbury by the council to the vacant treasurership. After this effort she expired.

Her majesty was a woman of an affectionate heart and upright intentions, but naturally of ordinary intellects, not susceptible, probably, of much improvement, had pains been bestowed upon them, which had not. Although mild and courteous, she was not exempt from fits of sullenness and resentment, and was capable of dissimulation. But the last was a vice it was hardly possible to escape; it was the practice of all around her, with the exception, perhaps, of the ungovernable Duchess of Marlborough. Her notions of government were those of her family, narrow and arbitrary. Warmly attached to the church and the Tories, she was not very tolerant of civil or religious liberty. Dr. Sacheverell was her model of spiritual conformity and obedience, and she countenanced several harsh attempts to check the growth of dissent. But she laboured under one great disadvantage during her reign, in the absence of a firm and enlightened statesman to direct her councils. Godolphin, who served her the longest, could hardly pretend to that character; the rest were adventurers only.

(K. p. 429.) Death of the Duchess of Marlborough.

She survived all her children except the youngest, (Lady Mary Churchill,) the duchess of Montague. Her bereavements wrought no alteration in her character, nor abated, in the least, her worldly sympathies. To the last she continued a vehement politician; in place of Harley and St. John, Sir Robert Walpole and Queen Caroline became the fixed objects of her hate and invective. The pacific policy of the minister she held to be inimical to the greatness of the country, though her aversion has been ascribed by the minister's son to less patriotic motives. Among the few favourites she possessed among her relations, was Lady Diana Spencer, afterwards Duchess of Bedford. It became, according to Horace Walpole, a scheme of the duchess to marry this young lady to Frederic, Prince of Wales; a project of ambition that Walpole defeated. Whether this account be true or not, enmity to Sir R. Walpole became the ruling passion of her latter life. "I think," she writes, "'tis thought wrong to wish any body dead, but I hope 'tis none to wish he may be hanged, for having brought to ruin so great a country as this." Her dislike of Walpole may have been a principal source of her dislike of the queen of George II., between whom and the minister existed an intimate friendship.

Next to politics, the most enduring and disturbing passion of the duchess was the desire to heap up — acre upon acre, and thousand upon thousand. Hunger or thirst is appeased by indulgence, but avarice, like ambition, grows with what it feeds on. The widow of Marlborough had 40,000*l.* per annum, but that was not enough to satisfy her insatiable cravings. She tired out the treasurer by complaints and petitions about a paltry salary of a few hundreds, to which she thought herself entitled as ranger of Windsor Park. Within a few months of her death, she sought to obtain an extension of the lease of Marlborough House. It appears, from her will, that she was constantly making additions to the immense landed property in which she possessed a life-interest, and even went into the city herself, when nearly eighty years of age, to bid for Lord Yarmouth's estate.

The duchess, however, was not without some redeeming qualities. She had little deceit, and was direct and open in conduct. Indeed, her nature was too impetuous to be guileful, or successful in the exercise of that petty craft of life which Hobbes calls "crooked wisdom." Her plain dealing with Queen Anne, however reprehensible for loss of temper and occasional arrogance, rises high in comparison with the vile duplicity of Mrs. Masham, and the servility and intriguing meanness of Harley. Right or wrong, hurtful or advantageous to herself, she could not help, to use her own expression, "tumbling out her thoughts to the world."

As her hold of life became weak, she began to look forward to the future reputation of herself and husband in the opinion of posterity. In her eighty-second year, she published "An Account of the Dowager Duchess

of Marlborough from her first coming to Court." It was the production of herself, aided by the literary services of Hooke, the Roman historian. In the composition of the work, the usual artifices have been resorted to, to make out a favourable case, by partial statements, but its general faithfulness has not been impeached. In the month of September previous to her death, she describes herself as having entered into a "new business," which interested her extremely; tying up great bundles of papers to assist very able historians to write a "Life of Marlborough," in two volumes folio, with an Appendix. For raising this literary monument, Glover and Mallet were selected, and a legacy of 500*l.* each was left to them, but the task was never executed; probably the meagreness of the remuneration, or the condition annexed by the duchess, that no part of the duke's history should be in verse, frustrating the undertaking.

As the darkened day drew nigh, the poor duchess was fain to be contented to amuse herself by writing in bed, in which shackled position much of her Account was penned by her. She frequently spoke six hours a day in giving directions to Hooke. Next she had recourse to a chamber-organ, the eight tunes of which she was obliged to think much better than going to the Italian Opera, or an assembly. Society seems to have afforded her little pleasure. Like most disappointed and discontented persons, she became attached to animals, especially to her dogs, which had those virtues, in which human beings, in her estimation, were so greatly deficient. Nothing can show more completely her disgust and weariness of the world than her own confession. "It is impossible," she writes in 1737, "that one of my age and infirmities can live long; and one great happiness there is in death is, that one shall never hear more of any thing they do in this world."

In the gloom of the sick chamber, to which, by the decrepitudes of age, she was frequently confined, the unbroken spirit of the duchess showed itself still. "Old Marlborough is dying," writes Horace Walpole, "but who can tell! Last year she had lain a great while ill without speaking: her physician said she must be blistered, or she would die; she called out, 'I won't be blistered, and I won't die.'" She did die, however, at last. And so ended a woman, eminent for great natural shrewdness and vigour of will, but not remarkable for high moral worth, or great intellectual gifts and culture.

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THE END.

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